

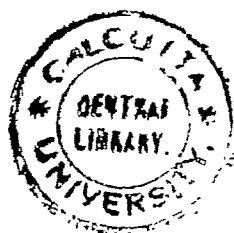
CUR-H00508-8-005860

NEW SERIES

VOL. VIII, NO. I

1972-73

BULLETIN
OF
THE DEPARTMENT
OF
ENGLISH



CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

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EDITED BY
AMALENDU BOSE



CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

EDITED BY AMALENDU BOSE AND PUBLISHED
BY SIBENDRANATH KANJILAL, SUPERINTENDENT
CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY PRESS.

GS 5860

THE BULLETIN of the Department of English, Calcutta University.
Annual Subscription : Inland : Rs. 5.00 (inclusive of Postage)
Foreign : 13s. (inclusive of Postage) *Single Copy* : Inland :
Rs. 2.50 (exclusive of Postage) Foreign : 6s. 6d. (exclusive
of Postage).

All materials intended for publication in this journal, books
for review, business correspondence, subscriptions (Cheques
should be made payable to "The Pro-Vice Chancellor, B.A.
& F., Calcutta University"), reprints, exchange journals, etc.
should be addressed to:

Officer-in-charge,
Bulletin of the Department of English,
Calcutta University,
Asutosh Building,
Calcutta-12.

TELEPHONE : 34-3014 (Extn. 26)

PRINTED BY SURAJIT C. DAS, AT GENERAL PRINTERS
AND PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LIMITED, AT THEIR WORKS
ABINAS PRESS, 119 DHARAMTALA STREET, CALCUTTA-18.



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THE TWO TRENDS IN MEDIEVAL LOVE LYRICS



SAKUNTALA MUKHERJEE

The Old English poems are sometimes very powerful and deep, but often they seem to be dull and grim, perhaps for the very simple reason that there is hardly any free play of human emotion. The Old English poets expressed the alert and firm mood of the warriors, the serious loyalty of a servant bound by the "comitatus-bond" and the deep devotion of the newly converted Christians. But all these are duties : values imposed from outside. These are the things which always form the outer surface of our life. Other human feelings like secular love find hardly any place in Old English poems.

To the Anglo-Saxons, the whole world was a vast battle field, and the fight was both physical and spiritual. They fought the Danes ; they fought Satan. In a battle field there is hardly any role for women and hardly any scope for love. Juliana, Helena and Judith were virtuous ladies, but they were not lady-loves. Among the very few love-lyrics like *Wulf and Eadwacer*, *Husband's Message* and *Wife's Lament*—the pleasure of love-making is not so intense as the mental tension of the lovers.

In the Middle Age, the social perspective changed: the terror of Danish invasion subsided. The Normans, who came next, became at the same time the enemies and the teachers of the English people. The Englishmen realised that world was not all a battle field, but also a very pleasant place to live in,—with flower and fruit, cuckoo and spring, bowers and damsels. To control this overflow of earthly pleasure, there was the embankment of Christian duties, a very outstanding stone of which was mariolatry. Men began to worship women as the symbol of Virgin Mary. Thus developed the chivalrous love of man for woman in the Middle Age, the age of "heroine-worship".

A large number of songs, composed in praise of beautiful women—were new addition to English literature. No one could expect such songs in Old English, because the tenderness of love was unmanly to an Anglo-Saxon hero, and to devote a whole poem in praising the beauty of a woman was mere cowardice. For the medieval poets, love was one of the important themes in poetry. The medieval lovers were always

chivalrous, heroic and patient, and the ladies were handsome, sweet and gentle:

“Madame, ye ben of al beaute shryne
As fer as cerclod is the mapplemounde;
For as the cristal glorious ye shyne,
And lyke ruby ben your chekes rounde.
Therwith ye ben so mery and so jocounde,
That at a revel whan that I see you daunce,
It is an oynement unto my wounde,
Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.”

Alisoun is perhaps the most well known lyric where the beauty of the ladylove is the subject-matter.

In the lover's eye, the whole world was one of leafy spring, with joy and beauty everywhere; the birds and beasts shared the springtime enjoyment:

“Lenten is come with love to tounne,
With blosmen and with briddes rounne,
That al this blisse bryngeth,
Dayes—eyes in this dales,
Notes suete of hyhtegales;
Uch foul song singeth
... ..
Mody meneth, so doht mo.
Ichot ycham on of tho
For love that likes ille.
... ..
The mone mandeth hire lyht;
So doth the semly sounne bryht,
When briddes singeth breme.
Deawes donketh the dounes,
Deores with huere derne rounes,
Domes forte deme.
Wormes woweth under cloude;
Wymmen waxeth wounder proude,
So wel hit wol hem seme.
Yef me shal wonte wille of on,
This wunne weole I wole forgon,
Ant wyht in wode be fleme.”

But love and spring time are not always associated. The feeling of love was so strong that even the northwind was welcome, because northwind could be the poet's messenger to the lady-love:

“Ichot a burde in boure bryht,
That fully semly is on syht,
Mensful maiden of myht;

Feir ant fre to fonde ;
In all this wurhlice won
A burde of blod and bon
Never yete y nuste non
Lussomore in londe.
Blou northerne wynd!
Send thou me my suetyng!
Blou northerne wynd! blou, blou, blou!"

Love, joy, beauty and purity—these were the major themes of medieval English love-lyrics. But this seems to be the one half of the picture—the brighter and the more important half though it is. True it is that the joy of love is always accompanied by the pain of betrayal and rejection. The medieval poets, too, realised it later on:

"Madame, for your newe-fangelnesse,
Many a servant have ye put out of grace
I take my leve of your unsteadfastnesse,
For wel I wot, whyl ye have lyves space,
Ye can not love ful half yeer in a place.
To newe thing your lust is ever kene ;
In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene."

One step further, and we are in the midst of an uncouth and grotesque world made up of boredom, vexation and anger. The lyrics which introduce us to such a world are no full-fledged love-lyrics; because love is not the feeling that has inspired these. Yet they are within the category of love-lyrics—because love has resulted in these. These may be the reactions either against an over-sentimentalism in love as treated by most of the medieval poets, or against the bitter experiences in love. When the first intensity of passion for composing love-song was minimized, the poets, to their utter disappointment, realized that the lady-love should always be a woman of flesh and blood, and in real life women are not all handsome, all sweet, all gentle and all pure. If a man is not totally disillusioned about women, he cannot describe the feminine ugliness in detail with such relish:

"Of my lady well me rejoise I may!
Hir golden forheed is ful narw and small ;
Hir browes been lik to dim, reed coral ;
And as the jeet hir yen glistren ay.
Hir bowgy cheekes been as softe as clay,
With large jowes and substancial.
Hir nose a pence in that it ne shal
Reine in hir mouth though she uprightes lay.
Hir mouth is nothing scant with lippes gray ;
Hir chin unnethe may be seen at al.



Hir comly body shape as a footbal,
And she singeth full like a papejay."

(early 15th century)

The poem seems to be a parody of the familiar Middle English love-songs describing the beauty of the lady-love.

Moreover, when faithlessness in women has almost maddened Troilus and the knight in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, and even the suspicion of which has made Othello and the lover in *Porphyrion's Lover* kill their ladies, we can hardly believe that faithlessness in women can make man as peevish as this:

"Looke well about, ye that lovers be:
Lat nat youre lustes leede ypu to dotage.
Be nat enamerod on all thing that ye see:
Sampson the fort, and Salomon the sage,
Deceived were for all theire gret corage.

... ..
I mene of women, for all their cheres Queint—
Trust hem nat too moche, theire trowth is but geason.
The feirest outward full well can they peint;
Theire stedfastness endureth but a season,
For they feine frendliness and worchen treason.

... ..
Women of kinde have condicions three:
The furst is they be full of deceit;
To spinne also is theire propurte;
And women have a wonderfull conceit,
For they can wepe oft and all is a sleit,
And when they list the teere is in the ey—
Beware! therfore: the blind eteth many a fly."

(late 15th century)

But deception does not seem to be the only thing that agitated poets so much. Because, another poet has adopted the tone of a medical man prescribing the patient-like lovers to avoid such an infectious disease as love, which sucks all the manly strength out of a man's body:

"Burgeis, thou haste so blowen atte the cole,
That alle thy rode is from thine face agoon,
And haste do so many shotte and istoole,
That fleesh upon thy carkeis is there noon:
There is nought lefte but empty skinne and bone.
Thou were a trewe swinkere, atte the fulle,
But now thy chumbre toukes been, echon,
Peesed and fleedde, and of her laboure dulle."

Evidently the poet is bored by excess of love-making. He realises its baneful effect not only on mind, but on body. Thus, the elfin music of

love in early Middle English is reduced to mere bodily exertion in the end of the medieval age!

In all these poems, men are protesting against love very strongly. But more prominent, undoubtedly, is the note of man's helplessness in the strong, all-compassing clutches of the shrewish women—who boss men over, turn their life to hell and make them whine and flatter women and whimper like children when beaten:

"All that I may swink or swete,
My wife it will both drink and ete;
And I sey ought, she will me bete;
Careful is my hart therefor.
If I sey cught of her but good,
She loke on me as she ware wod,
And will me clout about the hod;
Careful is my hart therefor.

... ..
If ony man have such a wife to lede,
He shall know how *Judicare* cam in the crede;
O! his penans God do him mede!
Careful is my hart therefor."

It is specially so when the wife is elder than the man. For then the poor man remains for ever under her guardianship without any hope of rescue:

"Ying men, I warne you everichone,
Elde wives tak ye none,
For I myself have one at home.
I dare not seyn, whan sche seith 'Pes!'"

... ..
If I aske our dame bred,
Sche taketh a staf and breketh mine hed,
And doth me rennen under the led.
I dare not seyn, whan sche seith 'Pes!'"

... ..
If I aske our dame cheese,
'Bcy' sche seith, 'all at ese!
Thou art not worth half a pese.'
I dare not seyn, when sche seith 'Pes!'"

The sharp contrast between the heroic knight of the medieval age, wooing his lady in the most tender and most manly way—and this timid creature under the guardianship of his wife, is too obvious to point out! Just as the medieval knights fought the battles and won the ladies—here we have young men resolved not to marry at all, because women are tyrannic:

"In all this world nis a meriar life
Than is a youg man withouten a wife;

For he may liven withoughten strife
 In every place where so he go.
 In every place he is loved over all,
 Among maidens grete and small,
 In dauncing, in piping, and renning at the ball,
 In every place where so he go."

As long as women are at a distance, they seem to be full of variety. But take one of them to wife, see her from very near—and all the charm is gone! She is not a fairy, nor a symbol of purity either, but a shrew! And women are all alike at bottom:

"Some be mery, and some be sad;
 Some be besy, and some be bad;
 Some be wild, by Seint Chad!
 Yet all they be not so.

... ..
 Some be wroth, and cannot tell wherefore;
 Some be scorning evermore;
 And some be tusked like a bore.
 Yet all they be not so.

For some be lewd and some be shrewd.
 Go, shrew, where so ever ye go!"

This vexation is not against married wives only—but against women in general. Most of the poems of this type have no mention of wife in them.

In the first stage of love-songs, all the lovers were poetic, manly and chivalrous, just as all ladies were sweet, gentle and handsome. But in this world there are clowns side by side with heroes, just as there are shrews side by side with fairies. Love is a feeling meant for all—brave and timid, heroes and fools, handsome and ugly—alike. And when in love, each behaves so differently! And the fun of it is that the way of love-making which is fit for a knight, is so ridiculously unfit for a common man!

A poem like *Alisoun* is inspired by love; again a poem like this also is inspired by the same feeling:

"Lord, how shall I me complain
 Unto mine own lady dere,
 For to tell her of my pain
 That I fele this time of the yere?
 My love, if that ye will here,
 Though I can no songes make,
 So your love changeth my chere,
 That when I slepe I may not wake.

... ..
 In the morning when I rise shall,

Me list right well for to dine,
 But comonly I drink mone ale,
 If I may get any good wine.
 To make your hart to me encline
 Such tormentes to me I take;
 Singing do the me so mikell pine
 That when I slepe I may not wake."

The poor lover cannot compose love-song, yet he has to do it, because the knights do it. The knights, in order to win their ladies' mind performed difficult duties, risked even their lives. Here, our poor lover is eating as much as possible to look strong before his lady:

"I may unneth boton my sleeves
 So mine armes waxen more;
 Under my hele is that me greves,
 For at my hart I fele no sore;
 Every day my girdell goth out a bore;
 I cling as doth a wheton cake;
 And for your love I sigh so sore
 That when I slepe I may not wake.

... ..

My dublet is more than it was,
 To love you first when I began,
 It must be wider by my lace,
 In each a stede by a span.
 My love, sith I becam your man
 I have riden thorow many a lake,
 One mileway morning I can
 Yet when I slepe I may not way.

Thus, a common man, otherwise normal and natural, becomes grotesque and hence ridiculous, when he tries to put on the attire of a hero. The difficulty of an unfit garment is that the wearer feels very uneasy in it and tries to take it off sometimes unconsciously; but the next moment he realises his mistake and tries to mend it by pretending to be very easy in the garment. The common men were not born for courtly love and were not at all accustomed to it. Yet that was the *fashion* and hence, to be followed. The consequence of it is known to all—a mixture of pretension and vexation:

Welcom be ye whan ye go.
 And fare well whan ye come;
 So faire as ye there be no mo
 As brighte as bery broune.
 I love you verrily at my to,
 Nonne so muche in all this toune;

I am right glad when ye will go,
And sory when ye will come.

Yet life is to be lived, and there man cannot totally avoid the company of woman. Chaucer has shown a way in which one need not take the trouble of acting like a hero and one need not go hungry for want of love :

"But yit, lest thou do worse, tak a wyl ;
Bet is to wedde than brenne in worse wyse."

All these poems, giving mock-picture of love, have been categorised by Frank Sidgwick and E. K. Chambers (in *Early English Lyrics*: 1966 Edn.) as "trivial". But why are these trivial? Were not these the products of any serious thought? True it is that nearly all these poems contain elements of humour in them. But "humour" is not opposite to seriousness; and humour should not necessarily lead to triviality. Here we have a distorted, grotesque picture of love. But are they not distorted deliberately by the poets, who thought the typical love-lyrics of the medieval age to be too hackneyed, too stock-in-trade? Their lyrics are the cartoons of solemn love-lyrics of medieval England. But for these "cartoon-lyrics", we would not have been able to realise that medieval love-lyrics were going away from real life and that they were leading to sentimentality.

These "cartoon-lyrics", obviously, are the products of late Middle English literature, when courtly love could not charm the poets any more. Protests in different ways were heard everywhere. Chaucer mildly ridiculed the courtly love convention in his *Knigh's Tale*; and his *Troilus and Criseyde* is a loud protest against the unrealistic courtly love. Later on, Shakespeare has presented us two contrasting couples like Orlando-Rosalind and Silvius-Phebe: it is for us to choose the right kind of love. Even in the twentieth century, Shaw put forward before us much the same idea through *Arms and the Man*.



MARLOW'S TRAGIC VISION IN *LORD JIM*

KALYAN CHATTERJEE

In *Lord Jim*, Conrad's underlying purpose is to present a vision of human life through the double method of the viewer and the viewed. Though Conrad's technique in this respect may seem a little like a Chinese box—Conrad views Marlow, views Jim—the very complexity of the technique is a part of the novelist's grand design to find an artistic interpretation of a theme not unlike the one troubling the soul of an earlier writer, namely, Shakespeare. Conrad devised an ambitious technique for the expression of this theme, and the most crucial aspect of this technique is the role of Marlow, whose narration, often imaginative, projects around Jim a meaning and significance which Jim himself might never have been aware of. Marlow's role is also to objectify in the novel what, if given to Jim, the hero, would have been too subjective, to soliloquize what would have made Jim too self-conscious a hero. As far as the novel has any objective correlative, we should seek to find that in the character of Marlow himself. The advantage of physical length that a novel has over a play gives to Marlow the unique opportunity of squeezing the last drop of melancholy, wonder, and mystery into a drama, largely acted out by Jim. The significance of this drama as well as Jim's role in it belongs primarily to the interpretive function of Marlow, who strategically casts himself in the role of an observer, with minimal share in the action. I seek to discuss these points at some length.

From the very moment Marlow meets Jim, he begins to weave about the latter a chain of ideas of which he is unaware. One of the remarkable features of Marlow's narrative is his incurable tendency to soliloquize (I insist on using this word, even though Marlow is supposed to be telling his story to an audience) and reflect aloud. Even though Jim lived on a plane beyond Marlow's personal experience, the latter's brooding imagination turns the unknowing hero into a symbol and a representative. Jim becomes a symbol of conflicts and confrontations, of resolutions and retreats, which Marlow had darkly dreamed about and visualized as the portion of one who grapples with destiny.

What attracts Marlow to Jim is that the latter is no ordinary dreamer, who separates his life of action from his dream, but a man who weaves a dream around his action and would not accept a separation between the two. The truth about the veteran seaman, Marlow, who

often mused profoundly and agonizingly over the call of the sea, is not that he did not have such dreams, but that he did not identify the dream with the action, at least not in the way Jim did.

But it is Marlow's narrative that shows us Jim gradually acquiring the grand proportions of a hero. Jim stands on high principles, on grand ideals of conduct, he pursues the sinking star of his dream to the utmost bound of the civilized world, he presides over the loyalty and creed of an adoring people, the Patuanese, like a mysterious god. He is set against a world indifferent to both good and evil, is confronted with a Luciferian enemy, and is shown to lay down his life with a defiant face.

As Marlow's tragic perception of Jim's destiny increases, he encases the fatal young man in a portentous chiaroscuro. Jim appears to Marlow as a "white speck catching all the dim light left upon a sombre coast and the darkened sea" (296).^{*} Jim, as it no doubt seemed to Marlow, stood on the bank and shoal of time, jumping for the life to come. It is Marlow's fear and apprehension that threw a thickening darkness around Jim, as he said his last good-bye to the former. Truly enough, the momentary chalice of his glory and delight will be filled with poison, and the sword would fall from his hand.

Marlow's description of Jim as "a cruel and insoluble mystery" (296) to all those who loved him is aimed at conveying a sense of the dark scheme of things in which he moved rather than bedevilling any approach towards understanding him. It is a fact that his mysterious incomprehensibility to the awed citizenry of Patuan gives to him, in their eyes, an extra-ordinary stature. And it is also a fact that the images of dark inscrutability, of the mysterious and shadowy, that Marlow's concluding remarks pile on Jim as choric comments on his life and death add to his appeal as a tragic protagonist to whom the dark mystery of life remained insoluble even in death.

Still, the language of this epitaph of Marlow on Jim's death may carry the impression that Marlow himself failed to understand Jim, or at any rate, disapproved his self-sacrifice: "He passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic," "he goes away from a living woman to celebrate his pitiless wedding with a shadowy ideal of conduct," etc. (313).

The above words do not really dissociate Jim from Marlow. A little analysis of the Marlow-Jim relationship will establish my point.

To begin with, Marlow has often asserted that Jim is one of "us" and some of the last words he has to say in his epistolary narration of Jim's death are the following: "He is one of us—and have I not stood up like an evoked ghost, to answer for his eternal constancy?" (313).

Marlow found something constant in Jim. He has tacitly made Jim the representative of a whole race of men, to which his (Marlow's) own identity becomes more and more inseparable. Marlow has repeatedly

said, about four or five times in the novel, that Jim is one of "us," each time with some mystification. Does this "us" mean Englishmen, which both Marlow and Jim are? Does it mean the white race, as opposed to the browns of the tropics? Does it mean the sailing profession, to which Marlow and Jim belong? Yet there are occasional implications in Marlow's narrative that the meaning of "us" is more universal than the guesses above would suggest, for example, the following: "A lost youngster, one in a million—but he was one of us; an incident as completely devoid of importance as the flooding of an ant-heap, and yet the mystery of his attitude got hold of me as though he had been an individual in the forefront of his kind, as if the obscure truth involved were momentous enough to affect mankind's conception of itself" (75).

Jim for Marlow represented not only an individual problem, but a human predicament. Marlow himself has brooded over this human predicament deeply and long, and as Jim begins to walk over the narrow edge of this predicament, Marlow becomes an interested spectator, who gradually gets involved. Jim's commitment to his ideology and the resulting battle he faces unfolds to Marlow the possibilities of a tragic drama. In this tragic drama, the moral issue, if there is any clear-cut one, is whether constancy of virtue and commitment to an ideal conduct is at all possible, or avails anything. Jim's "eternal constancy" led him to face a "proud and unflinching" (312) death, which after all is only a defeat courted in a victorious way.

Yet, undeniably a sense of incomprehensibility at Jim's martyrdom flows as a cross-current in Marlow's compelling self-involvement in Jim's fate. The fact is that although Jim attracted him irresistibly, Marlow could not quite make up his mind as to what opinion he would take of Jim. Marlow confesses that sometimes the reality of Jim's existence came to him "with an immense, overwhelming force," at other times "like a disembodied spirit ... ready to surrender himself faithfully to ... his own world of shades" (313). This ambivalence of his attitude to Jim underscores a tragic conflict, in which Marlow finds a shadowy, but irresistible, image of his own problem of being.

It is remarkable that Jim himself does not suffer from any conflict of attitudes or purposes. For him the problem is clearly one of the success or failure of his ideal of conduct. Though conflicting emotions seized him before and after the desertion of the *Patna*, yet his mental state was more akin to remorse. He became terrifyingly remorseful over his deviation from his own ideal of devotion to duty, from his own dream of protecting those trusted to his charge by heroic action. But his failure made him only more inflexible, more resolutely bent upon seeking an opportunity to test his courage and ability. He was a dreamer, and a perfectionist. As a boy, the novelist tells us, Jim "saw himself saving people from sinking ships, cutting away masts in a hurricane, swimming

through a surf with a line .. always an example of devotion to duty, and as unflinching as a hero in a book" (11). It is his constancy of purpose to behave as an unflinching hero that propels Jim, through initial cowardice and nervousness, to his eventual winning of glory, but also to his "proud and unflinching death," in Patusan.

It is Marlow's narrative that throws around Jim an aura of mysteriousness, injects into the novel a philosophic wonder. Without Marlow the novel would have been a simple tale of adventure reduced to a fragment of its size, having for its substance the three high points of Jim's life as a hero: the boyhood incident in the training ship, which left a mark of shame on his mind, the *Patna* incident, which burned him in shame and remorse, and the eventual enthronement as *tuan* and protector of the Patusanese, ending climactically, or rather anti-climactically, with his sudden downfall and execution. Conceivably, one can condense and rewrite the novel along these lines, throwing over such a redaction, say, a Hemingwayesque directness and romanticism.

But that is not the kind of novel intended by Conrad, for whom the story of Jim's adventurous life was only an outer framework to contain his so-called "misty stuff." This misty stuff, which abounds in Marlow's narrative, is not actually a mere mist containing no precious jewel, as E. M. Forster suspected. In *Lord Jim* the so-called misty stuff is as much a focal point of interest as Hamlet's soliloquies in the outer framework of the revenge tragedy.

No sooner has one analogized *Lord Jim* with *Hamlet* than one becomes aware of an even more important likeness between the two works: *Hamlet's* peculiar hold on the readers is for its tendency to probe into some philosophical issues. That *Lord Jim* is intended to furnish a philosophical examination of life is made evident by Conrad himself in his preface to the novel: "The pilgrim ship episode ... was an event ... which could conceivably colour the whole 'sentiment of existence' in a simple and sensitive character" (7). The simple and sensitive character, Jim, play out the game of existence, but it remains for Marlow to add the "sentiment."

It is Marlow who casts Jim into a symbolical action, views him as the hero of a portentously tragic theatre. But Marlow got interested in Jim by degrees, until Jim became for him a hero dramatizing an aspect of life about which he had thought agonizingly and long. The recurrence of the image of the sea as a perilous and destructive element with a fatal fascination for the romantic and adventurous is a symbolical device which unites Marlow with Jim. Marlow is aware of the mysterious call of the sea and has often thought deeply and yearningly about the meaning of the life of a seaman: "There is a magnificent vagueness in the expectations that had driven each of us to sea ... in no other kind of life is the illusion more wide of reality" (101). Jim's dream of heroic action

is viewed in this frame of meaning, that is, the illusoriness of the sea, which again, it would appear to a reader, is a symbol, probably of the human existence. And on this mysterious sea of human existence, Jim sails on his bark of dream to reach his goal, though bedevilled by a nagging memory of past weakness.

The spectacle assumes tragic foreboding, and for some philosophic advice, Marlow runs to the sage Stein, another dreamer, but one who has been able to reconcile life to his dream by his quiet love of beauty and by self-understanding. Stein does give Marlow a bit of stoic wisdom, and remarkably enough, using the sea imagery: "A man that is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea," etc. (163), a passage too well known to the readers of Conrad to need to be reproduced here in full. Stein's stoic advice is provoked by his awareness that Jim is a romantic in the headlong pursuit of a dream in an inimical world. Stein puts himself, Marlow, and Jim in the same class of men, romantics all, and implies that Jim's viability as a character is largely the result of self-identification on the part of both himself and Marlow. He asks, "What is it that for you and me makes him—exist?" (165). At this point of the novel, we have come nearest to a confession that Marlow's ideas, and probably also Stein's, have coloured the way Jim is viewed in the novel. Marlow comments that Jim's "imperishable reality" (165) was an irresistible truth to him, and goes on in a Shelleyan vein to claim Jim as a sort of an Epipsychidion: "I saw it vividly as though in our progress through the lofty silent rooms . . . we had approached nearer to absolute Truth, which like Beauty itself, floats elusive, obscure, half-submerged, in the silent still water of mystery" (165).

The Truth of life itself appeared to Marlow as a mystery. The adjectives, "inscrutable", "incomprehensible", "obscure", etc., which dominate Marlow's epilogue, are, in so far as they apply to Jim's life and character, transferred epithets; Marlow does present Jim as a recognizable type, a tragic hero. On the stage of a life beyond Marlow's actual personal experience, Jim becomes an active seeker, a hero, seeking to redeem his failures and resolve his problem of being by self-fulfilling actions and attitudes. What makes him tragic is his loneliness on the one hand, and the dark, ominous forces of this world poised against him, on the other. And this confrontation, fraught with tragic potentiality, is the mainspring of Marlow's brooding on the enigma of Jim's fate. Invested with Marlow's tragic thought, Jim becomes symbolic. "I don't know why he [Jim] should have always appeared to me symbolic" (201), Marlow himself confesses.

The ring of Shakespeare's tragic thought becomes the overtone of Marlow's language as he views Jim more and more as a tragic hero. In describing the inveterate satanism of Brown, Marlow's words have even the echo of the Jacobean tragic rhetoric: "The corpse of his mad self-

love uprose from rags of a destitution as from the dark horrors of a tomb" (288). To convey the sense of the tragic theater in which Jim plays his ineluctable role, Marlow's language becomes evocative of the Elizabethan tragic dramatists, whose awareness of the dark enigma of life was the nearest thing to Conrad's vision of life. It would be remembered that of the three books that Jim took on his voyage to Patusan, one was "a thick green-and-gold volume—a half-crown complete Shakespeare" (181). But the tragic theater is reminiscent, not only of the Elizabethan, but also of the Christian, concept of the struggle between man and his destiny, between good and evil. The satanic attributes of Brown have deliberately been emphasized. The ugly, "sun-blackened" Brown, when he saw Jim at the height of his glory in Patusan, "cursed in his heart the other's youth and assurance" (286). With "an immensity of scorn and revolt at the bottom of his misdeeds" (289), Brown "had a satanic gift of finding out the best and weakest spot in his victims'" (290), and was able to tempt Jim to step into his diabolical trap.

Marlow's narrative focus is on the images of tragic destiny that cast their shadows on Jim. He presents Jim less as a character than as a figure looming against mighty and ominous horizons. He has twice used the image of Jim as a white speck shining portentously against a darkening background on a lonely coast (253, 296). A Hamlet-like sense of life as a puzzling mystery, a Macbeth-like premonition resulting from life viewed as a dark promontory, and the Biblical image of the shattering of the paradisiacal dream by the operation of the satanic forces of this world serve conjointly to bring the maximum amount of universal implication into Jim's tragic predicament. The same way as Shakespeare invests the tragic thought of Hamlet with images conveying a sense of the inscrutable and obscure, Conrad piles images of the mysterious and insoluble on Marlow's brooding over Jim's life and character. Marlow's narrative seeks to present the enigma of Jim's life, not resolve it. The final act and death of Hamlet, undone like Jim by the secret working of evil, did not resolve anything, the Prince's death did not throw any light on the insoluble problems which came to him in solitude with oppressive insistence. Both Jim and Hamlet can be shown to have some latent weakness in their character that made them vulnerable. But neither Shakespeare nor Conrad would find in that a key to the dark gloom of mystery that surrounded his hero. The tragic threnody of Elsinore could be heard over the waves of the East Indian seas.

A MINOR RIDDLE IN SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

SUNIL KANTI SEN

In the first nineteen sonnets of the 1609 edition which form a distinct sequence Shakespeare's main concern appears to be his friend's increase. The doctrine of increase was one of the medieval commonplaces inherited by the Elizabethans. "The which thing (all men know) can never be done without Wedlock, and carnal copulation" (*Encomium Matrimonii*, Erasmus, translated by Thomas Wilson). In Elizabethan love poetry the argument that celibacy is against the law of nature has been cunningly used by importunate lovers. When Leander says to Hero

Who builds a palace, and rams up the gate
Shall see it ruinous and desolate.

Ah simple Hero, learn thyself to cherish:

Lone women, like to empty houses, perish.

he is not entirely disinterested.

Venus uses the same argument while wooing Adonis.

Upon the earth's increase why shouldst thou feed,

Unless the earth with thy increase be fed?

In Shakespeare's sonnets the motivation appears to be different. Whatever his relationship with his friend, clean and warm friendship or pederastic infatuation, the poet's plea that he should marry and beget children appears to express a genuine concern for a fair creature's increase. Behind this plea lies an obsessive fear of 'the bloody tyrant, Time'. In sonnet 12 he says that breed is the only defence against 'Time's scythe'. In sonnet 15 it is suggested for the first time the poet can mitigate time's ravages by recreating his love in verse. "As he takes from you, I engraft you new". But he argues in sonnet 15 that the 'mightier way' to make war on time is to marry and procreate as neither "Time's pencil" (which means the "painted counterfeit" in line 8) nor his "pupil pen" has the power to defeat time. In sonnet 17 he is still diffident about the death-defying power of his verse but there is a distinct advance in self-confidence. His 'pupil pen' has the potential power to enshrine in immortal verse the beauty and charm of his friend but it would be wiser to marry and beget children instead of relying exclusively on his rhyme lest 'the age to come' should think it too heavenly to be true. In sonnet 18 he drops the earlier plea for marriage and in superbly controlled verses he defies time and promises eternal summer to his friend. In the next sonnet the tone is more aggressive and the poet defies

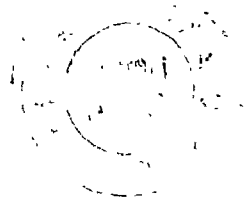
time's 'antique pen' to taint the undying youth that his 'pupil pen' shall bestow on his love.

Here is a minor riddle. Why should he drop in sonnets 18 and 19 the elaborately argued case for marriage? There is one simple answer. Shakespeare is interested in the immortality of his fair youth who is a paragon of beauty (beauty's rose). In the earlier sonnets the poet makes use of the traditional doctrine of increase through wedlock as he is unsure about the powers of his verse. In sonnet 15 there is the first hint that poetry can in a measure immortalise beauty. Then follows a sudden discovery that the immortality that poetry can bestow is more precious than a fresh print through marriage. I find this answer much too simple to be convincing. I wish to argue that sonnet 20 is the key to this riddle. The boy-woman Hermaphroditus image of the sonnet is a much truer description of the strange infatuation Shakespeare felt for his fair youth and the poet was never seriously interested in his increase. The poet had the instinctive tact to realize that the doctrine of increase can serve different ends in different situations. In a Leander-Hero or Venus-Adonis situation it is an artful device for making love. Where friendship has no sexual overtones, the older friend urging a young and handsome boy to marry and procreate can be a polite form of paying tributes to his beauty. It would be idle to pretend that Shakespeare's relationship with his friend was one of simple friendship and in the first nineteen sonnets the poet is almost afraid to probe the nature of this relationship. Hence he falls back on polite commonplaces. Indeed in these sonnets Shakespeare appears to write under a constraint; the element of playfulness, the use of quibble and double entendre which make some of the later sonnets so rich and multi-layered in meaning are noticeably absent in these sonnets. In these elegant literary exercises the familiar arguments for marriage and breed derive their energy from the poet's real apprehension that time may soon blight 'beauty's rose'. But the pretence of simple friendship is overworked. In sonnet 15 the ground is slightly shifted and there is the first hint that poetry too can defend beauty. In sonnets 16 and 17 it is repeated with some diffidence and in the following two sonnets the theme of marriage is dropped altogether. That poetry can eternalise beauty is not a new discovery made by Shakespeare; it is a literary commonplace which replaces the traditional commonplace of the doctrine of increase. Shakespeare soon finds both of them inhibiting. With sonnet 20 begins a frank exploration of the tensions and complexities of this strange relationship, and in the legend of Hermaphroditus he discovers a true allegory of his situation.

But since she pricked thee out for women's pleasure,

Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their treasure.

With this daring use of double entendre begins a new sequence of sonnets.



DOCTOR FAUSTUS : THE TRAGIC THINKER

BEDASRUTI DAS

The intellectual force of the modern time can be traced in its embryonic form in the Renaissance. The modern man's yearning to place himself above all creation and dominate over it is the essence of tragic suffering in Doctor Faustus. Faustus struggles to be free from all human limitations, and with his powerful imagination he creates a fantastic dream world (which has been so externalized into action that it seems real), where he apparently appears to be the supreme master. But, he ultimately realizes the limitation of human intellect, the only source of his strength, and in despairing agony stretches his hand to God, the emotional attachment with whom he could not totally reject.

Faustus' understanding of the limited significance of the human existence on the earth and his dream of achieving Eternity bring him close to our contemporary sensibility which constantly stresses upon the hollowness of life and struggles desperately for some kind of significant identity. In order to establish this historical continuity and make '*Doctor Faustus*' relevant to us, I have deliberately ignored the kind of importance that the supernatural entities held in the Elizabethan belief and thinking and tried to bring out their relevance in modern context attaching symbolical significance to them. From this perspective, let us see what Marlowe has to offer to us.

Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* is a play of one character, everything happens within the mind of the hero, the Wittenberg-scholar—Dr. Faustus. Other characters are not given individual exposition; they are the symbolic abstractions of Faustus' own mind excepting the characters in the comic scenes. There is no external action. The incidents are not real; they are the logical sequences of the hero's imaginative mind and partly the dramatist's crafty intention to assert the universal significance of the hero's Life-experience. All these generalized statements will be analysed critically in different sections of this article.

Mr. Joseph T. McCullen raises a violent objection about the genuineness of Faustus' intellectual power. He writes, 'Both his (Faustus) words and actions show that his tragedy results from culpable ignorance, and not from any superior attainment that set him at odds with conventional thinkers.'¹ On the other hand, there is the popular understanding of Faustus as 'one of the great representative figures of his time, capable of the fullest experience of the intellectual and moral ordeals of his generation.'² Mr. Leonard H. Frey identifies himself with the latter

school of critics, asserting, 'Faustus, the master scholar of the opening scene, is the epitome of Renaissance man, exultant in his consciousness of knowledge.'³ Truly, Faustus was an acknowledged scholar of his time, which has been clearly stated in the opening speech of the Chorus:

'So soon he profits in divinity,
The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd,
That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's home,
Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes
In heavenly matters of theology.' (II 15-19)

Faustus' perverse interpretation of the Biblical text ('The reward of sin is death: that's hard./*Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas*;/If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and there is no truth in us./Why, then, belike we must sin, and so consequently die:/Ay, we must die an everlasting death.' Act I, Sc I, II 40-44) tempts Mr. McCullen to believe that 'he (Faustus) states half truths as if they were the sum of wisdom'. But he is completely unaware of the risk of committing the same mistake (which he apparently finds in Faustus) in his serious consideration of these lines as the true reflection of Faustus' wisdom. Faustus is discovered in his prime glory of academic brilliance and it is unusually naive to accept that he was ignorant of the 'consoling promise' stated in the Biblical text: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness' (I John i. 8-9). It is, in fact, Faustus' deliberate and conscious act. He rejects the existing beliefs in God and Religion. He is opposed to a blind, irrational submission to anything that lies beyond human perception and the scope of rational understanding. Decision precedes explanations. He decides to reject religion and then tries to justify himself by logic. Hence the twist in the interpretation of the Biblical text.

Mr. Cole in his investigation into the cause of Faustus' tragic suffering and tragic doom reaches the conclusion that 'the perverted will is the cause of all evil, and the root of that perversion lies in the impulses of pride and egoism'.⁵ But more dominant in Doctor Faustus is Man's natural and *instinctive* aspiration to know the unknown, to explore the eternal significance of life and to overcome human limitations with the opening of new possibilities. This prompts Faustus to choose his course of action. Faustus' will is not at all perverted, but natural and pathetically human. As a representative figure of Renaissance Free Thinking, Faustus strongly asserts that the essence of life lies in the natural outlet of human instincts.

(II)

Faustus stands as a questioner, but is rather too impatient to commit himself hastily. Mr. J. B. Steane rightly points out, 'The 'man' is

caught at that decisive moment in his life when he is to choose and 'be committed'.⁶ R. B. Sewall refers to the basic dilemma in Faustus as 'the desire to exploit its new mastery and freedom and (on the other hand) the claims of the Old teachings, which to defy meant guilt and a growing sense of alienation'.⁷ The defiant spirit of Faustus seeks to transgress human limitations. He forsakes the path of beliefs and breaks away from the past. He commits himself to follow the course of rational thinking and signs the contract to be eternally bound to Lucifer. Lucifer, with his ambition and pride in individual potentialities, stands as a symbol of superb intellect in 'Doctor Faustus'. He is defiant against God, the symbol of highest authority in the world of mythic beliefs, and strives to assert man's individual dignity. His world, represented as Hell, is symbolic of the realm of intellect. The true import of Faustus' commitment to Lucifer thus becomes quite obvious. Faustus not only defies God but also denounces the traditional truths reflected in different branches of knowledge, such as Law, Medicine etc., because none of them can lead him to the state for which he strives—Eternity. Faustus thus confronts situations in his own characteristic way, relying absolutely on his intellect.

Two sets of characters symbolically represent two aspects of Faustus' own character; intellect and instinct. Lucifer, Beelzebub and Mephistophilis are representatives of his intellectual life and, to be more specific, Mephistophilis stands for the *attained* intellectual power of Faustus. Good and Evil Angels are the two aspects of his *instinctive conscience* and the Seven Deadly Sins the natural human instincts. Devils represent Faustus' desired supernatural powers achieved through intellectual exercises. Valdes and Cornelius magnify Faustus' own characteristics as has been significantly pointed out by Mr. J. P. Brockbank, 'Valdes, speaking for the fruits of the power, and Cornelius, for the delights of power as the exercise of knowledge, are only amplifying and explaining what Faustus himself has already expressed.'⁸ The Pope, Cardinal of Lorraine, The Emperor of Germany, Duke and Duchess of Vanholt, Horse-courser, A Knight, Spirit of Alexander the Great and Helen, in the play, are fictitious characters created in Faustus' imagination.

(III)

Dr. Faustus is responsible for everything that happens to him. Before his commitment to Lucifer, we find a soul in tormenting struggle. His mind is depicted as the battlefield of two conflicting forces: Good and Evil. That Good and Evil Angels are not dramatic entities has been appropriately pointed out by Mr. Cole, 'Faustus never directs his attention to Good and Evil Angels as dramatic entities; he neither speaks directly to them nor shows any sensible awareness of their physical presence.

Their words are suggestive, however, of *the drift of his own thought*.⁹ Further, Mr. Philip Henderson recognises the symbolic suggestion of these characters, 'the one (Good) symbolizing the prompting of his heart, the other (Evil) of his intellect'.¹⁰ However, intellect wins the battle. Faustus inclines to believe that intellect is the desired path of glory and power :

'Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
Wherein all Nature's treasure is contain'd :
Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements.'

(Act I, Sc. I, 1172-75)

The clue to the understanding of the fact that all the incidents of the play take place in Faustus' imagination lies in our discovery of Faustus in his study, both in the opening and the concluding scenes. It seems as if he visualises in his mind the possible outcome of his commitment to Lucifer. In fact, there is no steady linear progress of action in the play. 'Faustus' world *revolves around himself* from the beginning where he is discovered sitting in his study alone.¹¹

In Act I, Sc III, we find Faustus fondly caressing the intellectual possibilities, the glimpse of which he receives through imagination. He expects the elemental powers to come under his command :

'Faustus, begin thine incantations,
And try if devils will obey thy hest' (Act I, Sc III, 115-6)

'The God of Marlowe's play remains unseen and, for Faustus, unknown'.¹² Faustus' imaginative flight takes him to such an utopian world where Man's Free Will reigns as supreme authority :

'Having thee ever to attend on me,
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
To tell me whatsoever I demand,
To slay mine enemies, and aid my friends,
And always be obedient to my Will.' (Act I, Sc III, 11 95-99)

The major apparently external actions of the play rest on the execution of Faustus' intellectual power, which he receives from Mephistophilis at Midnight :

'Go and return to mighty Lucifer,
And meet me in my study at midnight,
And then resolve me of thy master's mind.'

(Act I, Sc III, 11 98-100)

The time-indication is suggestive. Midnight is intimately associated with sleep and, thereby, dream. That Faustus wanders in a fantastic dream world is further expressed in the following lines :

'*I'll live in speculation of this art,*
Till Mephistophilis return again.' (Act I, Sc III, 11 113-114)

Here the expression—'*I'll live in speculation...*' very poignantly suggests that the succeeding incidents are merely Faustus' speculation; they are

not real. But the dream incidents are so presented that it creates a semblance of reality and leaves as good an impact on us as real incidents would.

(IV)

Faustus' initial aspiration almost reaches that summit of power which is enjoyed only by the Almighty God :

'By him I'll be great emperor of the world,
And make a bridge through the moving air,
To pass the ocean with a band of men... etc.'

(Act I, Sc. III, 11 104-)

Here Faustus epitomizes an iron-bound aspiring soul seeking freedom.

Faustus' rational mind stands in violent opposition to irrational forces in human nature. But he is resolute in his 'choice' :

'Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub :
Now go not backward ; no, Faustus, be resolute'

(Act II, Sc. I, 11 5-6)

His signing of the contract with his blood confirms his deep-rooted conviction in man's intellectual potentialities. The congealing of blood suggests a *flickering* doubt in him (My blood congeals' Act II, Sc. I, III 61) He however, cannot completely cut himself off from the traditional truths, but he recognizes their limitations. For, belief or faith absolutely restricts the free play of man's intellect. As a result, an imaginative glimpse of the possibilities or achievements through intellectual exercise helps him to gain courage and strength to stick to his own commitment (Reenter MEPHISTOPHILIS with DEVILS, *who give crowns and rich apparel to FAUSTUS* (Act I, Sc. I).

The conditions in which Faustus is to act suggest that everything takes place in Faustus' world of imagination. The idea of changing his being into a spirit in form and substance is the crop of his own fantasy, ('Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance' Act II, Sc. I, 1195-96). Thus the basis of Faustus' actions rests on his imaginative assumption. Assuming a commitment to intellect Faustus inclines to fabricate logically the succeeding imaginative sequences.

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'As soon as the contract is sealed, Faustus learns of the limitations of Mephistophilis' power';¹³ that is, the limits of his intellectual power. The moment he realizes the limitation, his aspiration to conquer space, time etc. fails. His world shrinks. He limits Life between birth and death, which is the only cognizable truth to those who rely absolutely on intellect :

'Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine
That, after this life, there is any pain ?
Tush, these are tiffes and mere old wives' tales'

(Act II, Sc. I, 1129-133)

He rejects social customs, moral codes and advocates in favour of the natural and free course of life. For example, he denounces the sacred matrimonial relationship :

'Marriage is but a ceremonial toy ;

.....
She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall have...'

(Act II, Sc. I, 111-148)

(V)

Accepting the basic human limitation (Life caught in years), Faustus explores an individual approach to life, even though the divided soul could not sustain the vision in the long run. In Act II, Sc. II, we find the living embodiment of Faustus' philosophy of life. Faustus reaches a certain form of Reality through imagination ; to be more precise, he imagined the Real. This will become evident in the following discussion.

But Faustus cannot totally resist the temptation to look beyond death. The deep-rooted traditional belief in religious teachings left in him a flicker of doubt in his intellectual commitment :

'When I behold the heavens, then I repent,
And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,
Because thou hast depriv'd me of those joys.'

(Act II, Sc. II, 11-1-3)

Yet his reliance on man's intellect brushes off the irrational belief from his mind. He logically reaches the conclusion ; even if the heaven exists, man is a superior creation :

'Twas made for man, therefore is man more excellent' (Act II, Sc. II, 11-9). Nor can Faustus remain passive to the prompting of his heart. His emotional being is shaken. He suffers pangs in his deliberate suppression of the heart's dictates :

'My heart's so harden'd I cannot repent' (Act II, Sc. II, 11-18). However, he is relieved of the pain by casting a glance at man's worldly achievements by the exercise of intellect :

'Have not I made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander's love, and OEnon's death ?
And hath not he, that built the walls of Thebes,
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp,
Made music with my Mephistophilis ?
Why should I die, then or basely despair ?
I am resolved ; Faustus shall ne'er repent.'

(Act II, Sc. II, 11 26-32)

Faustus received the detailed knowledge of astronomy from Mephistophilis, but unsatiated by limited knowledge, he asks, 'Tell me who made the World ?' (Act II, Sc. II, 11-69). There is no reply. The answer

lies beyond the scope of human intellect. The haunting doubt crops up again :

'Ay ! go, accursed spirit, to ugly hell !

'Tis thou hast damned distressed Faustus' soul !

(Act II, Sc. II, 11 78-79)

But Faustus' doubt ceases with Lucifer's ceremonial presentation of the Seven Deadly Sins. Mr. Cole writes, "They (Seven Deadly Sins) are presented rather as a delight and gratification to him." He further continues that 'the Seven Deadly Sins—are merely symbolic ornaments rather than major moves of the dramatic action.'¹⁵

Discarding the irresponsible ramblings in the realm of fantasy, Faustus turns to the existing world of reality and explores a certain philosophy of life. The philosophy stands on the fundamental consideration of Man as a free entity. The free play of mind and the natural outlet of human instincts are the true potential worth of man's existence on this earth. In no circumstance should these courses be restricted. Pride, covetousness, Wrath, Envy, Gluttony, Sloth, Lechery—all these human instincts are the essential realities of Life. If a man is constituted of these components, why should they be called Sins ? Rational explanations are impossible. Hence, to Faustus, they are not Sins but the vital aspects of Life. In Faustus' world, all the traditional values are questioned and then thrown into the dark pit of oblivion. The existing social order breaks down. But the apparent utopian bliss to be enjoyed in the free course of life is a practical impossibility. The complex world-order would then be turned into a monstrous chaos. Faustus' view of life and world is, indeed, an utopia that can never be achieved, and even if it is achieved, the stone will roll downwards.

(VI)

That Faustus' soaring aspiration reduces to trivial attainments is reflected in Act III and Act IV. These trivialities suggestively affirm that the life committed solely to intellect is almost insignificant. Mr. David Bevington sees in the play 'a steady deterioration in Faustus' quest for knowledge ; he points out the increasingly coarse comedy of such late scenes as those involving Faustus in Rome and at the Emperor's palace, his dealing with the Horse-courser, and his services to the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt. Faustus is in this view, a man who degenerates from a seeker after wisdom to a mere prankster.'¹⁶ Even though Mr. Bevington undermines Faustus' career (inappropriately considering it as real) as a steady degeneration, Faustus offers us a fruitful experience of life, which possibly warns those who will be tempted to follow his track of thought and action.

(VII)

One can very safely ignore the unnecessary controversy whether the comic scenes of Robin and Ralph were written by Marlowe or not if their true significance can be clearly understood. In fact, the creation of these scenes reveals the artistic ingenuity of Marlowe. They signify the ill-digestion and misappropriation of knowledge. At the same time, they mockingly imitate the petty achievements of Dr. Faustus. Mr. Cole rightly points out, 'The comic scenes with Robin and Ralph also serve as commentary on Faustus' bargain and use of power.'¹⁷ With the introduction of these characters, Marlowe tries to describe the *universal significance* of Faustus' experience.

(VIII)

When Faustus recognises numerous cracks in his vessel of intellect, confused he tosses on huge waves of the troubled sea of doubts. Faustus becomes desperate. He seeks to gratify himself in the satisfaction of erotic desire. But, Love's delicacy being rubbed off, the lustful communion with Helen's spirit leaves him unsatisfied. The powerful, consummating kiss is, indeed, symbolical of Faustus' fruitless effort towards attaching great significance to the *sensual existence of man*.

Severe contradictions appear in the concluding phase of Faustus' imaginative world. The new values of life explored by him prove to be fallacious. The earth slips away from his feet. In utter despair he reaches out his hands to the traditional truth, but in vain:

'O, I'll leap up to my God! Who pulls me down? (Act V, Sc III 11-78) His overpowering commitment to intellect holds him away from such an irrational move. Faustus is finally discovered almost in the initial decisive moment of his life in the opening scene. But the mind then had an optimistic vision before it, and now it is exhausted. Static exhaustion is, indeed, the essential tragic element in Faustus.

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The Textual quotations have been taken from William Modlen's edition of the 'The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus', Macmillan, London, 1961.



AN EXPOSITION OF SATAN'S FALL IN "PARADISE LOST"

H. P. MOHANTY

Satan is the most difficult character in the book. His developments, his transformations make him complex. Particularly the Satan of the first four books is different from the Satan of the subsequent books and this leads to difficulties. But his fall is not difficult to account for. He falls because of pride and injured vanity. This again is due to self-love and self-esteem. For without self-love and self-esteem he could not possibly consider himself superior to the Son, think himself to be slighted by God, and feel envious, and hateful towards the Son and the Father. How this self-love and self-esteem grow within the metaphysics of Heaven is a large question unanswered by the author of *Genesis* or by Milton. However, the very questioning and critical spirit which we notice in Satan is strangely discordant with the obedience and acquiescence of other angels. This is the first, the subconscious violation of the order and scheme of Heaven. And this basic disorder or violation stands out prominently against the background of other angels and the Son's placid peaceful acquiescence in God's decree. Then there is the second step in the fall, the open, announced violation of the order by means of individual challenge, propaganda and persuasion. Satan wins over others to his side. The persuasion of course is done through false arguments, lies and legerdemain. For in the debate between Satan and Abadiel, in the fifth book (lines 771-802 and 809-847), Abadiel has the right and cogent reason; Satan has only bluffs, swagger, lies. Still Satan wins over a third of heaven's angels by his heroic stature and hortatory oratory.

From one point of view his pride and injured vanity and envy are justified. He was certainly the greatest in glory, grandeur, next to God. In the heavenly assembly he was the most awful and impressive in his bearing and other angels looked upto him as next in power and prestige to God. Hence the treatment which he got before the physical occurrences of the Fall, the stature he is given in Heaven certainly create certain impressions about his worth. The stature is not diminished in hell either. But Divine Reason is different. Divine Reason does not go by stature. Heroic and majestic stature is not necessarily the measure of true greatness. That was one belief of Milton.

However, Satan transgresses the Divine Will, the Divine Order and he falls. But though the root cause is the same as in case of Adam's and Even's fall—that is, self-love leading to trasgression of Divine Will

and Divine Order thus bringing on the punishment—the fall in Satan's case has certain interesting developments and ramifications. Besides his own injured vanity and hatred and passion—the individual evils within him—there is also his responsibility to his followers. Before the Fall this responsibility was not manifest, the question had not arisen then. The fate of the war in heaven had, from their standpoint, as much a chance of victory for them as for good angels. But after the Fall, the situation becomes complicated. When conflicts, guilt-consciousness, self-pity and self-contempt torment him in his 'address to sun' soliloquy (Bk. IV, 32-113), he sees a chance of saving himself by repentance and submission. But one important reason, apart from his sense of honour, why he is withheld is that he owes certain obligations, certain loyalty to his followers. And this loyalty to his followers—faithfulness, protectiveness and responsibility goes counter to his loyalty to God. The situation is exactly parallel to Adam's. Adam prays for the creation of Eve and gets her. Satan persuades the angels and wins them. And then emerge two orders of loyalties leading to two orders of values. In Satan's situation the two orders of values are these: one, the absolute frame of values or absolute good; secondly, there is his private good-remorse, tears, repentance. This second order of values is not co-existent with the first. It is not simultaneous. In fact it is the concomitant of his violation of the absolute order. There is thus no painful irony in the process of Satan's fall as it is in Adam's. Adam's tragedy lies in the poignant conflict between his noble humanity, that is love for Eve, and transgressed divinity, the growth of that noble humanity being concurrently the decline of his divinity. With Satan, the irony lies elsewhere. His pride, his will does not submit to God, the superior force. But it submits to the inferior angels. The good in him does not respond to the Absolute Good. But it can respond to the limited and circumscribed good in Adam and Eve. He is simply moved by their harmony and happiness and even hesitates to reap his revenge. He does not feel any qualm of conscience within the precincts of Heaven but does on the threshold of Paradise, after such a heroic and determined Odyssean adventure through Chaos, he wavers. But this irony can be explained. The clue lies in the essential egotism of Satan. It is his egotism which brought along the fall. It is again a different kind of egotism which leads to these tears and tortures. For one suspects that the feeling of smallness revealed in the famous 4th book soliloquy is not the right feeling of smallness. For one thing, the feeling of smallness in that soliloquy is not backed up by right kind of self-knowledge. Even in that most self-knowing moment Satan has certain self-deceptions about himself, about his relation to God and about his sense of God. There is a world of difference between the feeling of smallness that elevates the being and the same that leads to excruciating humiliation. True feeling of smallness leads to true humility, a false one

leads to temporary prostration but subsequent rebellion. That is what happens to Satan at the end of the soliloquy. After all, the reaction to his paroxysm of pain,

Me miserable which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?

Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;

is nothing but rebounding sense of pride and determination of purpose. After this Satan becomes smaller and smaller, meaner and meaner, more and more devilish and destructive, more and more given to lies, legerdemain, guile. His whole behaviour with Eve is positively loathsome. The heroic Satan of the first few books is degraded to a treacherous toad. In stature, in temperament and in action he is continuously degraded till he is at last turned into a serpent along with his followers. And the nodal points of this degradation are sharply brought out. First, the magnificent and dauntless hero raging up and down, commanding, reviving the frayed spirits of his followers. And in spite of his lies and loose logic he is able to prove himself the champion of liberty and honour, will and action, perfectly heroic virtues in themselves, second order of good, his universal good. But suddenly, surprisingly, we are presented with a different Satan in his soliloquy of self-knowledge, the very human, remorseful, desperate individual instead of the all-dominating hero. Next, the transfiguration to a cormorant, a toad, a snake. The first snake-form of Satan sharply contrasts with the final snake-form. The first one is delightful to see, like the snake in "Lamia", the last only a poor hissing thing. That is the line of his development, or better say degradation, which has a sharp turning, a sharp break in the middle, so much so that one critic, Waldock, thinks that there are actually two Satans in the two parts of the Poem. And they are two different Satans, one actual character and the other an allegorical abstraction. But why this inconsistency in the presentation of Satan? Inconsistency in itself is not bad in art. It produces what Forster calls round characters. And Satan is round. In that sense all the principal characters, except the heavenly hierarchy, are round. But Satan's change is most prominent because it is complete physically, functionally, spiritually. There are many explanations. One, the change or degradation that assumes such mammoth proportions was already there in the original. Milton was making an epic out of only seven pages or so of the original myth. Hence what happens in a miniature scale in the Genesis story becomes magnified manyfold in the vast epic. Second, the first part of the epic was written before the full disillusion of the Cromwellian rule had saddened the poet. Hence much of his ideological fervour and emotional beliefs went into the making of Satan. Milton was himself the arch-champion of liberty and individuality. Third, Satan reaped the full advantage of the creative urge which had been stored so

long with so much care. But Milton was never reasonably convinced about Satan's rebellious mind. Nor his sense of Right Reason would support such a cosmic disobedience. The trouble with Satan for the creative writer was that the evil in him displayed itself through good. Courage, discipline, command are values in crises which are thrown up by the wrong urge here. And the good, even though second order of good—in the form of courage, discipline, honour, liberty, loyalty to followers, even repentance, remorse—expressed thro' the evil of cosmic disobedience, going counter to Divine Reason and Right Reason, creates a duality of consciousness in Satan which is Milton's singular contribution to epic literature. That is why when Satan was slipping out of Milton's hands he was compelled to pull him up by controlling gears. There are two such principal gears through which Milton controlled his Satan. He never gave him correct or sound reason. Logic and reason are not Satan's *forte*. His is the mode of vigorous, vehement, wily orator in the first half of the epic, and that of the cunning, cautious quisling in the second—the dauntless hero who defies God and the fearful toad that dodges Adam. The second gear that Milton provides is pulling him short by continuous adverse commentary. What he displays by demonstration he destroys to a considerable extent by allegation. Discrediting riders like 'the arch-enemy Satan...began,' 'so spake the apostate Angel...racked with deep despair,' 'said then the lost Archangel' occur frequently.

There is a further weighty reason for applying these controlling gears. If Satan got so much creative energy to make him dynamic and domineering it was not only because he elicited certain deeply cherished responses of Milton but also because Milton had at his back the traditional epics of Homer, Virgil and Tasso. Their conception of heroism—giant beings performing giant actions—naturally came into full play in the creation of Satan. But Milton had his own notions of heroism. Moral and spiritual grandeur attained through self-conquest and in conformity with Divine Reason was for him true and noble heroism. So if he magnified the traditional heroism in Satan it may be that he wanted to crush it. Milton was himself no less an egotist than his immortal Satan. And by simultaneously giving expression to the traditional sense of heroism and his own sense of heroism he was doing and thereby proving that he could do what had not yet been attempted by mankind. This unique, unprecedented performance was Milton's explicit claim to glory.

Satan, we thus see, is not absolute evil. In fact Satan cannot be precisely defined in a word or formulated in a phrase. This perhaps led to the irritation of C. S. Lewis who called Satan 'nonsensical.' But Satan's contradictions and inconsistencies need not be disconcerting. His character is not static. It is evolutionary. At the beginning he is more divine than devilish both in mien and action. And this in spite of the Fall. But in course of time he becomes more and more devilish and at



the end there is not the slightest saving grace in him. At the beginning he violates only one order, divine harmony in heavenly hierarchy. But later he violates other orders. He violates the order of Paradise and Paradise in relation to creation. He disrupts the harmony of the human pair. He violates the order between man and God. And in this intensification of evil Satan's fall is different from Adam's and Eve's fall. In case of Eve the manifest evil is committed once and brings on the fall. In case of Adam the fall is one incident, one decision, one commitment. In case of Satan the fall is manifold. First, the spiritual fall, pride and defiance. Then the physical fall, war, expulsion and harm done to other angels. Third, the further fall through spite, revenge, temptation of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve harm only themselves. Satan harms himself, the angels and mankind. And thus because his crime is so very thick, the atonement is irredeemably complete.

TWO WORLDS IN THE FORSYTE CHRONICLES—THE OLD AND THE NEW

SUSHIL MUKHERJEE

In speaking of the two worlds in Galsworthy's Forsyte chronicles we may at the outset refer to the title of the first trilogy consisting of *The Man of Property*, *In Chancery* and *To Let*, namely, *The Forsyte Saga*. The title itself is indicative of the co-existence of the two worlds, the old and the new. The Forsytes belong to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century while the word 'saga' is associated with the old world, its dictionary meaning being "a prose tale in the old literature of Iceland", "a story of heroic achievement and adventure." Conscious of the anomaly, Galsworthy himself has explained the juxtaposition of the two words in his Preface. "The word 'saga' might be objected to", writes Galsworthy, "on the ground that it connotes the heroic and that there is little of heroism in these pages." He then proceeds to explain that the word has been used with "a suitable irony," adding that "the folk of the old sagas were Forsytes, assuredly in their possessive instincts, and as little proof against the inroads of beauty and passion as Swithin, Soames, or even young Jolyon." These, then, constitute the bridge between the old world and the new—the possessive instinct and the responsiveness to beauty and passion. "Human Nature", says Galsworthy, "under its changing pretensions and clothes, is and ever will be very much of a Forsyte, and might, after all, be a much worse animal."

Let us now come to the novel proper taking for our consideration *The Forsyte Saga* and *A Modern Comedy* which is the second trilogy, consisting of *The White Monkey*, *The Silver Spoon* and *Swan Song*. It is a period novel, its first scene opening on June 15, 1886, being the first chapter of *The Man of Property*, and its closing taking place in 1926, the year of the General Strike in England, in *Swan Song*. 1926 is a far cry from 1886. In 1886 it was still the Victorian world in England with the Queen on her throne and all right with the world (May Robert Browning forgive us!). It was the England which made Her Majesty's loyal subjects think that they were living in the best of all possible worlds, the world that produced enough coal to help the expansion of British trade and simultaneous expansion of British colonies. The typical Victorian complacency is pointedly expressed elsewhere, in *The Country House* (1907) where one of the characters says: "I believe in my father, and his father, and his father's father, the makers and keepers of my

estate, and I believe in myself and my son and my son's son. And I believe that we have made the country, and shall keep the country what it is. And I believe in the Public Schools, specially the Public School that I was at. And I believe in my social equals and the country house, in the things as they are, for ever and ever."

It was in this old world that the Forsytes lived comfortably, earned enormously and amassed plentifully under the economic system of *laissez faire*. Soames, the central character, has indeed been nicknamed "the man of property". Young Jolyon who had a penchant for the unconventional, remarked: "The Forsytes are half-England, and the better-half too, the three per cent half, the half that counts. It's their wealth and security that makes everything possible, makes literature, science, and even religion possible. . . . The Forsytes are the middlemen, the commercials, the pillars of society, the corner-stones of convention, everything that is admirable."

England in 1926 where the story of *Swan Song* brings us is a different world altogether. In fact, Soames whose career extends from one and to the other, broods upon the changes that had already taken place between Victoria's coronation (1837) and her funeral (1901): "Wellnigh two generations have slipped by—of steam-boats, railways, telegraphs, bicycles, electric light, telephones and now these motor-cars... Morals had changed, manners had changed, men had become monkeys twice-removed, God has become Mammon—Mammon so respectable as to deceive himself."

If this was so in 1901, in course of the next quarter of a century the world had changed almost beyond recognition, thanks to the First World War which ushered in a pleasure-mad, soulless age, an age that knew not what it wanted and yet was running down a blind alley with a mad thirst for something sensational, some frivolous enjoyment that would leave behind a burning forehead and a parching tongue but bring no real joy. The two previous wars, the Crimean War in the middle of the 19th. century (1853-56) and the Boer War at the end, had not produced much effect on the social life of the British people, but the Great War of 1914-18 was a different matter altogether, and Soames had lived to see his daughter Fleur floating in the current of contemporary aimlessness and feel the change. Soames who cherished old values found it rather difficult to swallow the pungent pill of the post-war world. This explains his anxiety about his daughter who was caught in the vortex of the post-war world. This pet daughter of a doting old father, his only child by his French (and second) wife Annette, whose story is told in *A Modern Comedy*, having failed to get Jon, the son of Irene (Soames's first and divorced wife) by her second husband Young Jolyon, had entered into a loveless marriage with Michael Mont, but wanted to have an affair, just for the sake of sensation, with Wilfrid Desert, a war-returned poet

with an unconventional outlook on life. Fleur had taken her lesson from friend (and later her enemy) Marjorie Ferrar, a social butterfly whose declared ambition was to be "the perfect wife of one man, the perfect mistress of another and a perfect mother of a third." Soames, the man of the old world, grew alarmed when he saw his daughter caught in the cross-currents of new life with its bad manners and loose morals.

In the Forsyte Chronicle Soames himself is the meeting point of the old and the new. The Soames of 1886 is not the Soames of 1926. When we meet him in *The Man of Property* as a suitor for the hands of beautiful Irene he is young in age but old in outlook—the traditional upper middle-class attitude of the typical Victorian Englishman is his, one who is concerned only with possessing property, including even the wife within that term. The typical Forsyte attitude is put in the mouth of Young Jolyon. "We are, of course, all of us, the slaves of property, and I admit that it is a question of degree, but what I call a 'Forsyte' is a man who is decidedly more than less a slave of property. He knows a good thing, he knows a safe thing, and his grip on property—it doesn't matter whether it be wives, houses, money or reputation—is his hall-mark." Soames Forsyte fully represents his tribe.

At the end Soames is an old man who has seen life through and has been mellowed by age and experience—and if it is not possible for him to jump into the new current of post-war life, there is an attempt at understanding the new generation (though not sympathising with it) represented by Fleur for whose well-being he shows such a great concern in spite of her determination to live a wayward life. As Baker in his *A History of English Novel* writes: "Galsworthy takes Soames as the representative Englishman of the successful classes, as almost the master-key to the social history of his generations; though in his after-life, recounted in *A Modern Comedy*, Soames finds himself out of the element in the emancipated post-war age, which he can only stare at in bewilderment and anxiety for those dear to him." Amidst the vanishing values of life old Soames stands, a sadder and wiser man, still holding to his own code of conduct and perhaps murmuring, as A. C. Ward would have us think: 'Young woman, in my earlier day it used to be said that your Victorian grandfather was an undesirable person. I am now being very reluctantly forced towards the conclusion that, compared with you, he was a perfect gentleman.'

The old and the new worlds meet in this monumental Nobel-prize winner novel which spans a period of four decades and shows innumerable men and women in their work and play. The Forsytes, as a family, represent the old and yet from the same tree branch forth a few who are heralds of the new—Young Jolyon, for instance, who felt no hesitation in leaving his wife and daughter to live with a dancing girl in open defiance of the strict social code of the Victorian era and for which he

was disinherited by his old father. Young Jolyon who belongs more to the new than to the old world, describes himself as "the missing-link between the Forsytes and other species of the human race." More so is his daughter June who is a rebel against Forsytism. It was she who brought to Irene new and radical ideas about love and marriage and so became instrumental in giving a surprising turn to her life. But more advanced in thought and action are the young people in *A Modern Comedy*—Fleur and Marjorie and others. And there is Wilfrid Desert, the war-returned Bohemian who openly tells his friend Michael Mont, Fleur's husband, that he is in love with his wife and wants to have her. In the age of chivalry this would have immediately led to a duel. But nothing happens here. It only sends Michael thinking and analysing the situation. Was Fleur in love with Wilfrid? No. She only wanted to have an affair with him as other girls were having. To have an affair with a boy-friend is almost a status-symbol among modern girls and one who has no such affair is an object of pity. We have already referred to Marjorie Ferrar's ambition to be sailing, not in two boats simultaneously, as we say, which is dangerous enough, but in three! This is the new world.

No wonder, even before all this, at the end of the first trilogy (*To Let*) Soames, sitting alone at the family cemetery at Highgate was dreaming his career, of the days that are one and of those to come: "To Let"—the Forsyte age and the way of life, when a man owned his soul, his investments, and his woman, without check or question. And now the State had or would have, his investments, his woman had herself and God knew who had his soul! Baker aptly comments "Galsworthy lingers at the funeral of Victorianism like an uninvited mourner, whose grief is more sincere than that of the family, because he expects no legacy."

It must however be said at the end that between the old and the new there is no break, the old containing the seed of the new and the new being a product of the old. Galsworthy viewed life as "ceaseless activity, perpetual change", the present as "the melancholy resultant of an infinitely complicated past, the fated sequel to what has been studied in the earlier page." If in *A Modern Comedy* Fleur's way of life is a shock and disappointment for her father and Soames's loneliness and estrangement from the world about him appear painful, it is only the nemesis that Soames, the man of property, had laid up for himself. In his Preface to *The Forsyte Saga* Galsworthy wrote: "Let the dead Past bury its dead" would be a better saying if the Past ever died. The persistence of the Past is one of those tragi-comic blessings which each new age denies, coming cock-sure on to the stage to mouth its claim to a perfect novelty. But no Age is so new as that!"



A NOTE ON GOTHIC 'ATTA'

SUBHADRA KUMAR SEN

In Wulfila's translation of the New Testament the word used for 'father' is *atta*, even though the derivative of the IE. word 'pater' is attested in Gothic. (vide S. Feist: *Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der Gotischen Sprache*). Here we cite a few occurrences from Wulfila :

1. **** fram attin izwamma thamma in himinam. (Matthew vi/1).
2. **** Atta unsar thu in himinam **** (Matthew vi/9).
3. **** wāituh than atta izwar **** (Matthew vi/32).

This peculiar usage poses the inevitable question : why is this so ? Why does Wulfila prefer the word *atta* to *fadar*¹ ? Two interpretations may be put forward : (a) in Wulfila's dialect the more frequent form was *atta* and (b) the two words were not exactly synonymous i.e., the words did not signify an identical concept.

The first interpretation is open to a serious objection. The derivatives of IE. *pāter are attested in all important subgroups of the Germanic family : OE. *faeder*, OHG. *fater*, ON. *fathir*. Hence its absence in the dialect of Wulfila, the bishop of the Visigoths, is such a remote possibility that it can easily be ruled out as an impossibility.

The second interpretation, apparently an intriguing one, is more rational. To establish the validity of the second suggestion, an attempt has been made in the following paragraphs to determine the exact semantic significance of both the words.

IE. **atta*, originally a baby-word, has survived in Hittite, Greek, Latin and Gothic.

In Hitt. we find the word *at-ta-as* (*attas*) = 'father' and a derivative *attalla* = 'fatherly'. (J. Friedrich : *Hethitisches Wörterbuch*).

GK. *atta*, derived from IE. **atta*, had developed a secondary meaning from its primary significance. The word is used in the sense of a small father (an endearing term). Dialectically it meant 'great father'. (Liddle-Scott : *Greek English Dictionary*).

In Lat. the word *atta* is used in the sense of father. There is a Roman surname in Atta : Quintius Atta—a comic poet who died in the

¹ Das Wort *fadar* ist in unserer gotischen Überlieferung nur einmal bezeugt Gal. 4/6 (N Sg. *fadar* im Sinn des Vok); sonst tritt dafür das Kinderwort *tta* ein (Krause : *Handbuch des Gotischen*, p. 168.)

year 102 B.C. Is it connected with the IE. word? In this connection it should be mentioned that the name Attila is derived from the IE. base *atta* + the Germ. suffix—*ila/—*ilo from IE.—*elo/—*olo. Cf. Wulfila, *barnilo*.

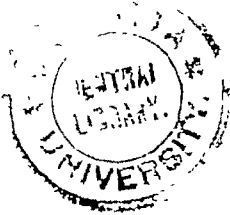
In Skt. we have a word *atta* = 'mother'. If this word is a Dravidian borrowing, as supposed by Monier-Williams in his Sanskrit-English Dictionary, we cannot take the word into account. If on the contrary the word is of IE. origin it can be cited in favour of our argument. It is a post-Vedic word used in Classical Skt. and Prakrit. The radical change in meaning need not appear disconcerting. The cult of mother worship is perhaps responsible for the transference of meaning.

Besides *atta* we have a masculine personal name *attaLi*.

In some New Indo-Aryan languages we find a group of words all connected with the IE. word : *ātā* (Assamese) = 'a term of address to a respectable old man', *ātāji* (Gujrati) = 'grandfather' and *ātā* (Sindhi) = 'grandfather'. Turner derives these forms **atta* (R. L. Turner : Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages Fasc. 1, p. 12).

In a Middle Bengali text of the eighteenth century there is an adjective *ātāi* = 'great' from **atta*.

From what has been said above it can be supposed that there was a subtle difference of meaning between **pater* and **atta*. The primary meaning of **pater* is procreator and of **atta* is great father or grandfather. The second word derived a new connotation from the primary meaning i.e., powerful or superior father hence divine father. Following Meillet and Ernout (Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Latine) it can be suggested that like Skt. *agnis* Goth. *atta* is '*mot de caractere religieux*'.



NEW SERIES

VOL. VIII, NO. II

1972-73

BULLETIN
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EDITED BY AMALENDU BOSE AND PUBLISHED
BY SIBENDRANATH KANJILAL, SUPERINTENDENT
CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY PRESS.
JT. EDITOR: K. G. LAHIRI

THE BULLETIN of the Department of English, Calcutta University.
Annual Subscription: Inland: Rs. 5.00 (inclusive of Postage)
Foreign: 13s. (inclusive of Postage) *Single Copy*: Inland:
Rs. 2.50 (exclusive of Postage) Foreign: 6s. 6d. (exclusive
of Postage).

All materials intended for publication in this journal, books
for review, business correspondence, subscriptions (Cheques
should be made payable to "The Pro-Vice Chancellor, B.A.
& F., Calcutta University"), reprints, exchange journals, etc.
should be addressed to:

Officer-in-charge,
Bulletin of the Department of English,
Calcutta University,
Asutosh Building,
Calcutta-700012.

PRINTED BY SURAJIT C. DAS, AND GENERAL PRINTERS
AND PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LIMITED, AT THEIR WORKS
ABINAS PRESS, 119 DHARAMTALA STREET, CALCUTTA-17

This volume is offered to Professor Amalendu Bose on the occasion of his retirement as Sir Gooroodas Banerjee Professor. His association with the bulletin of the English Department has always been most creative and inspiring for its career and, it is hoped, will continue to be so even after his retirement. The selection of the following essays dealing with various literary topics is best appreciated as a tribute to his wide range of interest and breadth of outlook.

It is for the readers and for Dr. Bose to judge how far I have been successful in discharging the duty, entrusted to me by the Department, of editing this special issue.

Thanks are due to our distinguished contributors and to those—particularly Mr. Dilip Kumar Mukherjee of the *Bulletin* and the *Calcutta Review*—who assisted me in various ways.

DIPENDU CHAKRABARTI

Guest-Editor.



Professor Amalendu Bose

Swirling eddies spout no jets of hope :
Adolescent urge spills over the waste.
Life's fruition leaves a bitter taste,
Unless resurgent youth finds greater scope
To force its way up the forbidden slope,
Encrusted with cant, barren, waste,

To fling in careless abandon, youthful haste
On the cactus-land a rich and fruitful hope.

Dreamlit, the resurgents stumble and scatter
round in broken, disordered, dismal ranks

Beneath a moon that seems no heavenly matter.
O Guru, Radiant Moon of our eastern banks,
Shower thy benediction and govern the surge
Ever sweeping onward with History's relentless urge.

DEBI BANERJEA
Department of English,
Calcutta University.

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JOHN COLET AND RENAISSANCE HUMANISM

KALYAN KUMAR CHATTERJEE

Though the common view of the English Renaissance is that it arrived in England by one big stride with an impassioned outburst of imaginative literature, signalled by, for example, *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557), yet that outburst has a traceable history of a developing intellectual orientation. A modern scholar is aware that neither the chronology nor the content of the Renaissance *vis-a-vis* the medieval era can be a matter of rigid definition, and the two, if not symbiotic, contained each other in their wombs for a prolonged period of incubation. Their distinctness as eras in terms of chronological boundaries is largely a convenient abstraction on the part of nineteenth century historiography. Yet defined in terms of tendencies, the separation of these two "eras" is a logical, even inevitable, distinction.

The Renaissance as an intellectual phenomenon started largely as a defence of the humanist literature of classical Greece and Rome against medieval strictures and Boccaccio's *Genealogia Deorum* (1360) vindicated the imaginative literature of the pagans by using the interpretive methods of the same Christianity which expelled the classical Muses from the university curriculum, namely allegorical interpretation. The inhibition from which imaginative literature suffered affected even Chaucer, who ended his *Canterbury Tales* with a retraction begging forgiveness for that he departed from "oure boke," which says "al that is writen is writen for oure doctrine," and though he feels justified in translating Boethius, *Consolations of Philosophy* and "othere bokes of Legendes of seintes, and omelies, and moralitee, and devocion," his "translacions and endytings of worldly vanitees" he revokes in this retraction.

If Boccaccio was primarily a poet arguing on behalf of the world of classical letters to soften theological opposition to it, in England's John Colet (1466-1519) we have a theologian who adopted the methods of humanist literary scholarship in Biblical exegesis, studying and interpreting the Bible in the same ways as a literary scholar would interpret his material. In taking this position, Colet, whether or not he shared the literary affinities of Boccaccio and other Humanists, exemplified the fact that Humanism, which was in essence a revival of classical learning and

a reorientation of the methods of scholarship along classical lines, notably that of the classical "grammaticus," pervaded the intellectual atmosphere of Europe from various, sometimes opposing, directions.

It is beyond the scope of this brief essay to even attempt a summary of Colet's career, except to say that between 1497 and 1504 he became an Oxford celebrity by his theological lectures in which he emerged as the champion of the new humanistic style of scholarly exegesis. In 1509 he earned the praise of all Humanists by founding, or as some believe, refounding the St. Paul's School, which was, if not the first, one of the first, and certainly the biggest school in its time to reject the age-old scholastic curriculum and adopt the Humanism-inspired curriculum of "good literature" and Ciceronian eloquence. He realised that since scholasticism had turned the universities into its strongholds, Humanism too must be an educational movement to create a counter-climate of opinion.

Colet, however, has not left behind him any substantial and continuous body of educational writing except that in the Statutes of St. Paul's School (1518) and in the few pages that he contributed to the most famous grammar of the English Renaissance, namely, Lily's grammar (c. 1509), he emerges as the pioneer of the classical studies and humanist pedagogy, which found a more elaborate treatment in the hands of Erasmus, Vives, and the Englishman of a later generation, Roger Ascham. Yet in his theological works, the most extensive body of his writings to have survived, his views on learning and scholarship found scattered, but cogent expressions. The presence of humanist strains in his theological exegesis is a significant index of the depths from which Humanism pervaded the intellectual atmosphere of England in the early Tudor era. These theological exegesis prove that Colet revolted against the scholastics and that he sought to found theology on humanist scholarship, on the "new learning." A recent historian of the education of England under the Tudors writes of the "new learning" as the critical and historical study of scriptures in the original texts and of patristic writers".¹ This definition may be only a partial one for the intellectual phenomenon under discussion, but it is a useful introduction to the humanist orientation of John Colet's exegetical style.²

The first requisite for a historical and critical study of the scriptures was to revive the literal method of studying them, a method neglected in the medieval exegesis but championed by Colet. According to Erasmus, who wrote a brief biography of Colet in a letter to Justus Jonas³, Colet was hostile to the scholastic theologians' over-application of philosophy and logical subtlety to theology to the neglect of the literal manner, to the "rash and overweening manner" of Thomas

Aquinas, who, as Colet viewed it, sought to explain everything by "profane philosophy."⁴ Colet in fact delivered a sizzling invective against the tendency to interpret scriptures by pagan philosophy and laid down the following dictum: "Those books alone ought to be read, in which there is a salutary flavour of Christ, in which Christ is set forth for us to feast upon. Those books in which Christ is not found, are but a table of devils. Do not become readers of philosophers, companions of devils."⁵

But the above injunction should not be taken as an absolute proof of Colet's obscurantism in regard to the importance of the pagan classics in the education of a Christian. Firstly, Colet's targets of attacks were "philosophers," and not poets and orators, the study of whom was specially urged upon by humanist theories of education. Secondly, Colet could not have thrown all pagan philosophers out of court, since he himself was greatly influenced by Platonism, allusions to which abound in his theological lectures including the one in which the invective occurs.⁶ Thirdly, and I believe that this was the case, Colet's disapproval of philosophers is derived from his opinion that the schoolmen neglected the primacy of the scriptures and attempted to explain everything by "profane philosophy," by which Colet obviously meant the Aristotelian philosophical machinery of the scholastics. Aristotle was the "philosopher" of the scholastic Middle Ages. But in Plato and platonizing theologians of the Renaissance, such as Ficino, "than whose language there can be nothing finer in philosophy,"⁷ as Colet himself commented, he found an exhilarating philosophical eloquence. The philosophical language of Plato helped him invest the Christian theology with eloquence. But in the scholastics' use of Aristotelian philosophy, Colet saw no attention paid to the scriptures, and that explains Colet's intolerance for the "philosophers."

Colet's advocacy for the primacy of scriptures aligned him with the Protestant Reformers who demanded literal exegesis of the Bible. "The object of the schoolmen," wrote Farrar, "is often far less to explain the meaning of a passage than to work it up dialectically, under the categories of Aristotle, and to arrange in the systematic form of endless sub-division of every possible lesson, which they think can be extorted from it."⁸ Colet's criticism of the scholastics' interpretation of the scriptures was not far different from the one above. Erasmus recorded Colet to have said of the Scotists that "it was the sign of a poor and barren intellect to be quibbling about the words and opinions of others; carping first at one thing and then at another, and analysing everything so minutely."⁹ In a sermon delivered to a convocation of priests (c. 1512)

at St. Paul's Cathedral, Colet ridiculed the hollow scholastic education of the clerics of his time in the following words. "Hit is nat inough for a priste, after my jugement. to construe a collete, to put forth a question, or to answer to a sopheme."¹⁰ "Sopheme" is *philosopheme*, and also has a *double entendre* on the word, sophistry. Colet lamented in the clerics the lack of "metely lernyng of the holye scripture."¹¹ The pre-occupation with philosophemes, syllogisms, and other odds and ends of the scholastic intellectual tradition led, Colet felt, to the neglect of the scriptures and he sought to redress the balance by a literal exposition of the scriptures. However, the true nature of Colet's literalism has to be properly understood. Colet was not an inflexible literalist and took a balanced position. In his lectures on Paul's Epistles, Colet frequently reminded his audience of the need of cleaving close to the text. However, clearer explanation often demanded digressions into philosophical discussions, frequently borrowed from Platonic theologians like Ficino and Pico della Mirandola.¹² This aspect of his exegetical method can be summed by a random quotation from his Oxford lectures: "This I will now do [that is, continue the exposition] following the track of St. Paul as I previously did. And though I may prove at times to wander away from my set task, as the method of clearer exposition shall demand I will recall myself, and return to the path, in such a way as in the end to be considered to have made no deviation from St. Paul's route."¹³ Colet was therefore willing to resort to philosophical discussion when need arose in the course of his exposition and not restrict himself to literalism only. In his *Exposition of Romans*, Colet did restrict himself to literalism, but then he did so for the instruction of one Edmund, as he himself declared in the work.¹⁴ The work, a partial and incomplete exposition of the Epistle to Romans, is indeed an extended gloss, verse by verse, often word by word. Apart from this concrete demonstration of literal exposition, the work contains another important aspect of Colet's exegetical style, for which I quote him again "Although an interpreter of Scripture is not called upon to play the part of a Grammarian, or examine words overminutely, yet, since my young friend Edmund, for whom I am dictating this, is studying literature along with his theological reading, I am willing to be the Grammarian for him on this occasion, by explaining the meaning of the word *transgressor*, or *prevaricator*. And I shall do the same from time to time afterwards also, as a fitting opportunity may suggest".¹⁵ (Colet then proceeds to give the derivation of the word as he found it in Perotti's *Cornucopiae*).

The passage quoted above indicates Colet's realization of the value

of grammatical and lexical analysis of the scriptural language, though he introduces the subject somewhat apologetically. Colet was often prone to analyse the history and etymology of Latin words in the Bible to interpret their meanings, and in at least one instance gave the original Greek cognates in Greek characters,¹⁶ which leads me to believe that Colet knew Greek at the time of lectures on Paul's Epistles (around 1497) or he revised the lectures in his later life when he is believed to have been studying Greek.¹⁷

Colet was a champion of language learning, since he realised that the inner meaning of the divine word would not be revealed without the knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. In the *Letters to Radulphus* Colet tells his correspondent of the need of being "versed in the Hebrew tongue," and of having "the means of consulting Hebrew commentaries"¹⁸ for one who would want to fully understand the words of Moses; because "it [Hebrew] is a resource with which Origen, and Jerome, and all the most careful investigators of the Holy Writ, were well acquainted."¹⁹ Just as Colet disliked the intellectual orientation of the schoolmen, he found the classically oriented Church Fathers admirable and exemplary. Erasmus tells us that in order to prepare himself as a theologian, Colet roamed "with great zest through literature of every kind" and devoted himself to the works of the Church Fathers. Colet's advocacy of linguistic and literary studies, his preference for the Fathers, in whom he found such learning, represent Colet's break with the medieval intellectual tradition in favor of the humanist.

Colet's dislike for scholastic exegesis was not only for that it was oversubtle, unscholarly and unliteral (in all these judgements Colet as well as other humanists may sound too harsh to us), but that it was also unliterary. In his Statutes of St. Paul's School (1518) Colet repeatedly underscored the need of cultivating the true Roman eloquence of Cicero, Terence and Virgil, and among Christian authors recommended the study of Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose for attaining such eloquence. He also expressly desired that the "blotterature" of the "later blynde worlde," that is, the Middle Ages, be altogether banished from his school²⁰ and the students be taught eloquence and wisdom from Greek and Latin authors of antiquity.²¹ As a preacher Colet was very eloquent, creating a stir in Oxford by his theological lectures,²² and was appointed the Royal Orator by King Henry VIII. His sermon to the convocation at St. Paul's, already mentioned above, is an example of his command of vivid prose. Erasmus wrote in a letter; "I have published a book on copiousness of matter and language,²³ which I dedicated to my friend Colet, a useful work for persons preparing to preach, though such studies are

scorned by those who despise all good Letters"²⁴ Colet found in classical rhetoric an aid to christian eloquence.

An important link between Colet's exegetical style and humanism, in so far as the latter was a revival of the study of classical letters, is to be found in the position Colet took in regard to the allegorical interpretation of the scriptures. As I have said above, Colet was not an inflexible literalist, nor did he oppose allegory as inveterately as some Protestant Reformers, for example, Colet's compatriot William Thydale; and Colet had good reasons. Allegory gave to patristic theology a valuable interpretive tool to discover in non-canonical literature metaphors and similitudes of the divine truth, revealed in the New Testament. By the same process the Church Fathers borrowed from pagan literature and philosophy: Origen, Jerome, Augustine all exemplify this borrowing from the pagans and were made much use of by the Renaissance humanists who wanted to justify their enthusiasm for the revival of the classical *humanitas* in Christian education. The humanists, for example, Erasmus, in advocating the study of the ancients argued that the spirit of Christ could have been more widely diffused than was ordinarily supposed,²⁵ meaning that the pagan authors and philosophers, born before Christ, could not have been devoid of divine wisdom. There is a distinct echo of this trend of thought in the following words of Colet: "In the world of creation as in a book, contemplative philosophers might easily have recognised God, and worshipped the Creator made known by His creatures."²⁶

The above smacks strongly of humanist apology for the classics, and led Colet to look upon allegorical interpretation as a fruitful and imaginative one for conveying deep underlying truths which in non-canonical and non-scriptural writings were expressed figuratively. The fables of the Old Testament, for example, are to be understood in such figurative ways "that so there may exist first a sort of stage, and rude show, and indistinct representation, albeit not of the absolute truth itself, yet still of some figure; of it that is to be; and that this latter may afterwards be more brightly manifested, and more clearly reproduce the reality itself; its shade being in some measure brought forth to the light, and the darkness that there was being as it were illuminated with colours."²⁷

In the above remark, Colet recognised the value of the non-literal and metaphorical language as a medium of expressing divine ideas before they are revealed in clearer light in the New Testament. There is also the implied assertion that divine truths need not be expressed in disembodied abstractions; figurative language gives similitudes in sensible form of the inexpressible divine idea, a conception for which I quote

the actual words of Colet: "You ought to speak metaphorically in such a way that you may be considered to have sought an expression from other sources, not to have spoken in accordance with the reality itself; and that it may be openly acknowledged that you are using, not what is strictly appropriate, but similitudes."¹⁰

In the New Testament, where the divine truth is revealed clearly, the sense, according to Colet, is wholly literal; but Colet did not in fact rule out allegorical interpretation, but insisted that the latter interpretation should not neglect the literal and his own words are again helpful in understanding his position: "Where the literal sense is, there the allegorical is not always along with it; but, on the other hand, ..where there is the allegorical sense, the literal sense is always underlying it."¹¹

Recognition of the validity of allegorical interpretation gave humanistic breadth to Colet's exegesis and taught him the value of the figurative and fictive modes of expression for revealing divine truths, and in this aspect of his exegetical style, as well as in the other ones mentioned in this brief discussion, is to be found the fundamentally humanistic orientation of Colet's mind.

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13. *Lectures on Romans*, p. 16.
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15. *Exposition of Romans in Letters to Radulphus*, p. 67
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THE ESSENTIAL WYATT: A STUDY OF HIS POETRY

SHANTA MAHALANOBIS

That Wyatt introduced the Petrarchan sonnet into England is by now a cliché of criticism. That Wyatt achieved some of his finest feats of reconciliation of 'immediacy' and 'convention' in some of his translations and imitations of Petrarch's 'Rime' is even now a subject for critical debate. Why he should have felt the need to do so is a matter for exploratory research. Sergio Baldi and Tillyard merely hint at the 'practical exigencies' of courtship that may have led Wyatt into translation and imitation. He may have followed the example of the French Pleiade group in trying to incorporate foreign forms into the native tongue. But Prof. Mason is more specific in relating Wyatt's need to the more generally felt Tudor need for ideal modes of thinking in Humanist writing.

"His abler contemporaries were aware, each according to his lights, of the need in a moral world threatening to break up, for the restatement of moral standards in such a way as to revive respect for the bonds which keep society from anarchy."¹

The task of translating this need into practice presented concrete difficulties. Apart from the subtly different 'love' stances of Tudor and Italian court-poetry there was the palpable difficulty of straining the resources of one language to recreate the syntactical enactment of experience in another. The 're-creation' was not always literal or faithful. For the terse, bare simplicity of Wyatt's colloquial fifteenth century English and the sensuous, melodic amplitude of Petrarch's open-vowelled Italian, had little in common. The connection between Wyatt's

Who shall me give
Feathered wings for to flee ;
The thing that doth me grieve
That I may see ?²

and Petrarch's

Qual grazia, qual amore, o qual destino
Mi dara penne in quisa di colomba
Ch'i mi riposi e levimi da terra ?³

(What grace, or love, or destiny will give me wings as of a dove, that I may find relief and raise myself above the earth ?), is not immediately

perceptible. Wyatt's poem continues in a very individual, un-Petrarchan vein, in a sequence of staccato self-questioning, directly and idiomatically rendered. The terse, irritable restlessness of the thwarted lover, the real, cold panic of lost direction stamp this simple Tudor 'ballette' :

Whome speke I to,
Unkinde and deff of ere ?
Alas, lo I go,
And wot not where.
Where is my thoght ?
Where wanders my desire ?
Where may the thing be soght
That I require ?⁴

The rhythmical intention of each poem is appropriate to the tone of its experience. And Wyatt transmits Petrarch's languid, sensuously pictorial dove-image into a fleeting metaphor of nervous bewilderment, no less real, though different.

That Wyatt often successfully overcame his difficulty 'of making something contemporary out of the alien or dead past'⁵ is more effectively established in such sonnets as '*The pillar perish't*' and '*The longe love, that in my thought doeth harbour*'. Petrarch's lament for the death of his protector and friend, the Cardinal Giovanni Colonna in '*Plottae l'alta colonna*', had a striking relevance to Wyatt's acute sense of loss at the execution of his protector and friend Thomas Cromwell. The quiet gravity of

The pillar perisht is whereto I lent
The strongest staye of myne unquyet mynde,
changes into the raw, jagged incisiveness of guttural monosyllables.
My minde in woe, my bodye full of smart,
And I myself, myself alwayes to hate
Till dreadfull death do ease my dolefull state ?⁶

The personal urgency of this poem recurs in his adaptation of Petrarch's Sonnet cxi

Amor che nel penser mio vive e regna.
(Love that doth reign and live within my thought).

Both Wyatt and Surrey have borrowed the theme of defeated Love fleeing from the face and cowering at a distance, in 'the hertes forrest' or the court as the case maybe, but while Surrey's is the typical plaint of the servile, courtly lover, Wyatt's poem reaches a startling ironic climax in his mockery of the stock battle convention of slave and master (lover and love) dying together in

What may I do when my maister fereth
But in the feld with hym to lyve and dye ?

And then the flat prosaic reversal of the last line,

For goode is the liff, ending faithfully.⁷

Elsewhere, even hardened Petrarchisms, the outworn courtly motifs of the tyranny of 'fayer Iyes', lover's sighs and frozen hearts, are re-vivified. Love, in true Petrarchan vein,

Spurreth with fyer, and bridilleth with Ise' in
Ausying the bright bemes of these fayer Iyes.

But Wyatt also has a way of down-scaling Petrarch. Transcendental aspirations are brought down to terra firma, to the mundane fleshly reality on,

Of hete and cold when I complain,
And say that hete doeth cause me pain,
When cold doeth shake me every vein
And boeth at ons, I say again
It is impossible.⁸

Foreign idiom is recast into English idiom and Wyatt transmutes the situation of his original to one more relevant to himself and his times. He turns to creative translation when he has to 'distance' some urgent personal matter, and, according to Prof. Mason uses 'his original as a mask or Persona, as a means of finding and creating himself.'⁹

Kenneth Muir disputes the intrinsic worth of these translated sonnets. He prefers the 'songs which came to him [Wyatt] as naturally as the leaves to a tree'.¹⁰ At least these were not marred by the metrical awkwardness and broken rhythms of the translations. But surely technical lapses were inevitable in Wyatt's solitary attempt in his period, to reconcile the needs of an English milieu with the demands of Italian conventions. His task of reinterpreting these conventions in the light of real personal and political experiences at the Tudor court, was difficult though laudable.

The chronological placing of the Egerton and Devonshire Ms. of Wyatt's poems, is still subject for conjecture. Opinions differ as to whether the translations or the technically simpler songs, are products of his maturity. Such controversies do little to illuminate the essential vitality of Wyatt's lyric poetry in these albums of verses, meant for circulation in Henry VIII's court, to be written or sung or accompanied by the lute. There are pages of dreary repetition no doubt. Most of the songs, ballads, ballettes, rondeaux, carols are in the popular medieval vein featuring endlessly the 'cruel', 'double-dealing', 'fickle' mistress and the woes of the lamenting suitor in service. Poem No. 6 (Egerton Ms.) beginning

But sethens you it assaye to kyll,
 Try crueltie and dowblenes.
 That that was yowers you seke to spill
 Against all right and gentilnes;
 And sethens yow will, even so I will.

is reinforced by the sentiments of Poem No. 119 (Devonshire Ms)

Ffor yff I have for my good wyll
 No reward els but cruelltye,
 In faythe thereof I can no skyl
 Sythe that I lovyyd ye honestlye;
 But take hede I wyll tyll I dye
 Or that I love so well agayn,
 Syns women use so muche to fayn.

Through monotonous repetitiveness Wyatt insists on the gnawing ache of betrayal and misplaced trust. With determined persistence he hammers on his sense of undeserved persecution, of wretched misery through variations of form, rhythm and structure. His predecessors of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and his contemporaries had mechanically handled the Provencal courtly convention of 'devoir'. Dependent proteges had addressed feudally superior patronesses; the 'baillie' (landless knight, squire or page) had humbly offered past, present and future service in all faithfulness and trustworthiness; he had mildly protested at the presence of rivals, at rebuffs and betrayals of affection. The strains of

I may well sygh for greuous ys my payne,
 Now to departe fram yow thys sodenly;
 My fayre swet-hert ye cause me to compleyn,
 Ffor lacke of yow y-stande full pytously,
 Alle yn dyscomfort wyth-owten remedy,
 Most yn my myndem my lady souerayn-
 Alas fer woo, departyng hath me slayn! ¹¹

are repeated in Nicholas Grimauld's jingle :—

If to my prayer all deaf, you dare saye, no :
 Streight of my death agilted shall you go.
 Yet in middeath, this same shall ease my hart :
 That Carie thou wert cause of all the smart. ¹²

Compared with these, some of Wyatt's 'complaints' startle by the liveliness of their swinging rhythms and the sting of their unpredictable rhymes.

What shulde I saye
 Sins faithe is dede
 And truth awaye
 From you ys fled ?

Shulde I be led
With doblennesse ?
Naye, naye, mistresse I'
I promiseid you
And you promisid me
To be as true
As I wolde bee ;
But sins I se
Your doble herte
Farewell my perte I

Robust argument replaces the lamentations of earlier love-complaints, until in the concluding stanza his playfulness is seen in the arrangement of the rhymes, 'saide', 'obeide' and 'betraide'

Can ye saye naye ?
But you saide
That I allwaye
Shulde be obeide,
And thus betraide
Or that I wiste—
Farewell unkiste !¹³

The juxtaposition of this song against the other two passages quoted, highlights its reversal of the submissive courtly attitude. It does not stop at mere experimentation with borrowed forms and rhyme-schemes but goes on to voice his sharp personal reactions.

Wyatt's 'popular' and 'courtly' songs and lyrics have run into heavy weather with quite a few critics, notably, Berdan, Mason and John Steevens. 'Lacking in emotion' ¹⁴ 'a mere gambit in the game of love' ¹⁵ are phrases flung at Wyatt's poems. They concede his skill as an experimenter who introduced the ottava rima, terza rima, strambotti, ballades, ballettes, rondeaux to lend variety and interest to the age-old theme of complaint. They are also agreed that Wyatt's poems are deeply embedded in the fabric of early Tudor court-life with intrigues, factions; and the precariousness of royal favour as its necessary condition. And that these poems yield their full significance only to a thorough sociological study of the entertainment of Henry VIII's court, its rituals dictated by a capricious king's deliberate attempt at resurrecting the golden age of chivalry and courtly love in a treacherously slippery world of 'doubleness' and political expediency. Elaborate, extravagant tableaux presented the spectacle of heroic lovers (as opposed to the romantic or plaintive lover) storming stand-offish ladies in 'le Fortresse dangerus'. The spectacle, rather than the implicit message of honesty,

good faith, steadfastness in love, appealed to the king and his courtiers.

A complete awareness of this background is certainly necessary to a full understanding of Wyatt's poetry. Without this, argues Steevens.

'its *essential* significance can never be recovered, only guessed at.'

In fact its 'essential significance' is inextricably connected with Wyatt's role in the political 'imbroglio' of Henry's court, in his schizophrenic acceptance of and mental rejection of

the Slipper toppe

Of courtes estates.¹⁷

His function as court favourite required unquestioning submission to opportunism in love and friendship, and to the vagaries of royal favour. But it failed to stifle his inner recoil from the nightmare uncertainty and grovelling self-abasement of a courtier's life.

'He belonged to a circle of fashionable and promiscuous people in which the business of court advancement and intrigue for family and faction was combined when possible with the pleasures of sexual attachment. But he gives the impression in his poems of wanting more keenly than most the values which that way of life slighted, notably the values of secure affection, mutual trust and kindness'.¹⁸

His recoil and his longing for value betray the psychological contradiction that finds occasional outlet in his poetry. Reason and passion contend for mastery in his verse-rendering of the obsessions and frustrations of love. This general subject is particularised in his own experience of love betrayed and love denied. He had to divorce his wife on grounds of infidelity within six years of their marriage. And his mistress Anne Boleyn, (if there is much truth in that rumour) had to be surrendered to 'Caesar'.

And graven with Diamonds, in letters plain

There is written her faier neck rounde aboute ;

Noli me tangere, for Caesars I ame.¹⁹

Wearied by the 'vaine travail', his captive heart still trails behind the fleeing figure, until, in the seventh line reason halts him and makes him abandon the chase.

Yet may I by no means my wearlad minde

Drawe from the Diere : but as she fleeth afore,

Faynting I folowe. I leve of therefore

Synes in a nett I seke to hold the wynde.²⁰

The pause after 'folowe' underlines a tonal shift from helpless enthrallment to rational self-discipline. The dialectical structure of 'syns' and 'therefore' suggests a tougher line of thinking in the lover, as in Donne's *A Valediction : of Weeping*.

Let not the winde
Example finde
To doe me more harme, than it purposeth ;
Since thou and I sigh one anothers breath
Who e'er sighs most, is cruellest, and hasts the others death.

Wyatt is then divided¹ within himself. The moralist in him recoils from the promiscuity of his life as a courtier. In a letter to one of his sons, he holds up the moral philosophers 'Senec and Epictetus' as noble exemplars of his cherished standards.

'Wisdom, gentleness, sobrenes, disire to do good, friendlines to get the love of manye, and troghth above all the rest.'²¹

He also advises his son against his own way of permitting the active demands of court life to silence (except in his verse) his inner repugnance for its evil ways. A tirade against his own sense of impotence 'foly' and 'unthriftness' leads to the generalisation of

'And herein let him think verilye that so goodly a work as man is, for whom al othir things wer wrought, was not wrought but for goodly things. Aftir a man hath gottin a wil and desire to them is first to auoyd euil and lerne that poynt alone neuir to doo that that within yourself you find a certain grudging against. No doubt in any thing you doo, if you axe yourself or examine the thing for yourself afore you do it, you shal find, if it be euil, a repining against it.'²²

In some of his lyrics and satires however, Wyatt openly 'repines against it'. He sheds his mild patient manner to 'contemne' vice' violently, indecorously, or to guffaw at it with bitter sardonic laughter. An aging coquette is coarsely reminded.

'For syns gray heres been powdered in your sable,
The thing ye seke for you must yourself enable
To purchase it by payment and by prayer,
Ye old mule !'²³

'Purchase', 'paymenr', 'prayer', the ugly jargon of 'trafficking' and trading replaces the delicately phrased legalistic bargaining between rights and duties of early Tudor love-poetry. And the exaggerated vulgarity of

A ryveld skyn, a stynking breth, what than ?
A tothless mowth shall do thy lips no harme :
The gold is good and tho she curse or ban,
Yet where the list thou mayst be good and warme ;
Let the old mule byte upon the bridill,
Whilst there do ly a swetter in thyn arme.'²⁴

is Jonsonian in its abhorrence of the abominable.

Such gross violations of courtesy and refinement are, fortunately, rare in Wyatt. His recalcitrance has gayer, more pleasing overtones in the eight-line strambotto :

Alas I madame for steyling of a kiss
Have I so much your mynd then offended ?

He continues with

Then revenge you, and the next way is this :
An othre kysse shall have my lyffe ended.
For to my mowth the first my hert did suck
The next shall clene oute of my brest it pluck.²⁵

The mocking, familiar tone, the risqué content is modelled on the Caritean Petrarchan Serafino's strambotti. For in Serafino's verse Wyatt found authority for some of the sarcastic witticisms to which he was himself inclined, but which had no precedent in English poetry except in some folk-songs which would have been considered beneath the notice of court-poets.²⁶

Wyatt, the moralist, serious and sarcastic, amused and annoyed in turns, was, however, no ascetic. For him, the experience of courtly love was genuine, and first-hand. The despair and disgust at its inconstancy was relieved by warming memories of its sweet sensuality

but ons in speciall,
In thyn arraye after a pleasant gyse,
When her lose gowne from her shoulders did fall,
And she me caught in her armes long and small :
There withal swetely did me kysse,
And softly saide, '*dere hert, howe like you this.*'²⁷

And moments of unexpected triumph force him outside the range of stereotyped rural imagery present in the courtly love-poetry of the fifteenth century. Wyatt rejects the typical tranquil setting of trees, birds, blossoms, tender green, summer, winter, spring, that floods Tottel's Miscellany. He leaves it to Surrey to restate it over again.

the blossom'd bowes revested green wlt h warme
The flowerd meades, the wedded birdes so late
Mine eyes discover.²⁸

Wyatt spies the more equivocal creatures and objects of nature—the honey and sting of the bee, the bush with the fair flowers and sharp thorns—as more appropriate to the ambiguity of his own responses, the enchantment and the aversion. The imagistic, riddle-like Poem No. 7 pictorially presents the essential, distracting ambiguity of Wyatt's personality. It bears quotation in full :

Venemus thornes that are so sharpe and kene
Sometyme ber flowers fayre and freshe of hue ;
Poyson oftime is put in medecene
And causith helth in man fer to renue :
Fyre that purgith all thing that is unclene
May hele and hurte ; and if thes bene true,
I trust somtyme my harme may be my helth,
Syns every wo is joynld with some welth.⁸⁹

The dual properties of every object, the 'hurting' and the 'healing' are directly applicable to Wyatt's own experiences. The natural imagery presents no extended analogy as does Donne's *blossom* in his poem of the same name. It merely gives pictorial equivalents for the poet's mental states. The 'Adder' in Poem No. 46 (The wandering gadlyng In the sommer tyde) is the pictorial equivalent for his own malicious triumph over his rival for a lady's favour.

'It pleased me then to have so fair a grace
To styng that hert that would have my place.'

And the 'bee' and the 'spider' in Poem No. 6 (Nature that gave the bee so fleet a grace) once again illustrate the duality (not 'doubleness') of one and the same thing, the 'honey' and the 'poyson' of her lips.

'Tho this be straynge, it is a straynger case
With oon kysse by secret operation
Boeth these at ons In those your lippes to fynde,
In chaunge whereof I leve my hert behinde.'⁹⁰

Such fresh integrated use of natural imagery is the exception rather than the rule in Wyatt's poetry. For Wyatt is no innovator. His experiments in form are partly for the listening or reading pleasure of his court audience and partly derived from the need to reconcile the regular, flowing metrical form of the ballad and carol tradition with the pausing verse of the discursive poetry of the fifteenth century.

'This seems to have been part of the rhythmical tradition of the language that went back to the alliterative line with its well-marked pause, separating two distinct rhythmical units ; it is the tradition that finds a related expression in plainsong, where diverse rhythmical units are divided from one another by pauses and are not intended to flow together in the way that creates regular metre.'⁹¹

One only needs to compare the smooth-flowing rhythm of Charles d'Orleans' 'May day' poem with Wyatt's '*You that in love finde lucke and habundance*'. Wyatt had been twice imprisoned in May, in the years 1534 and 1536, and the disjointed, vigorous imperatives of the poem suggest the poet's deep engagement with his experience as Charles's poem fails to do.

You that in love finde lucke and habundance
 And live in lust and joyful jolitie,
 Arise for shame ! Do away your sluggardie !
 Arise, I say, do May some observance !⁸⁸

makes greater impact than,

This tyme as lovers a permost defie
 Eche heuvy thought as ferforth as pei may
 And rise or phebus in pe morrow gray
 leiying aside alle slouthe and slogardy
 To here the birdis synge so lustily.

It is to Wyatt's credit that he could work within these overworked traditions and yet manipulate the refrains and the syntax to contain and enact the tensions of personal experience. His syntax becomes more elaborate and difficult in the subtle argumentation of

In hindering thou diddest fourther
 And made a gap where was a stile ;
 Cruell willes ben oft put under,
 Wening to lowre, thou didst smyle.
 Lorde ! how thyself thou diddist begile,
 That in thy cares wouldest me have lapped !
 But spite of thy hap hap hath well happed.

The delightful word-play of the refrain, the fine gradations of meaning in the thrice-used 'hap', run through the three stanzas of this poem, remarkable for its gay insouciance. For Wyatt, despite the 'brackishe joyes of courtes estates', its vanity and its flattery and its morbid despair, despite his serious moral concerns, indulged in moments of light-hearted sporting with the game of love. In 'if chaunce assynd' (No. 67) the diction and the refrain amuse by their swinging prosaisms,

And so I dryve,
 As yet alyve
 All tho I stryve
 With myserie,
 Drawing my breth
 Lowking for deth
 And losse of life for libertie.

And Wyatt adopts the urbane, Cavalier stance in 'Helpse me to seke', asking his mistress to help seek the heart he has lost to her.

'Alas and is there no remedy,
 But have I thus lost It wilfully ?
 I wis it was a thing all to dere

To be bestowed and wist not where
It was myn hert : I pray you hertely
Helpe me to seke,

Donne, much later, sings,

Yet send me back my heart and eyes,
That I may know, and see thy lyes,
And may laugh and joy, when thou
Art in anguish
And dost languish
For some one
That will none,
Or prove as false as thou art now.³³

Donne's tone is more masterful, Wyatt's more decorous, but it is less polite than that of the Tudor courtly lovers in *Tottel's Miscellany*. Wyatt is far behind the Metaphysicals in his relatively timid, comparatively simple, less exploratory bent of mind. He declares no new truths, initiates no striking technical innovations. But his reasoning and analysis of emotional experience, his zest in developing a great range of skill in the handling of patterns of verbal sound, his poetry of anguished self-division, are far ahead of his own time. 'Petrarch and Donne are greater love lyricists than Wyatt, but he, in his turn, stands head and shoulders above all his English predecessors.'³⁴

He abandoned the lyrical mode in 1536,. For the few remaining years of his life, (he died of a sudden fever in 1542) he recorded his disillusioned rejection of Court-life in his satires, and his search for the spiritual compensations of Christian forgiveness in the Penitential Psalms.

I, lord, am stray'd ; I seek without reeure
Fele al my lymns, that have rebelld for fere,
Shake in dispayre onles thou me assure.'

The execution of his close friends and associates (among them Anne Boleyn and Cromwell), his repeated imprisonments, the strain of trials and false accusations burdened his weary spirit, and made him acutely aware of his impotence,

These blodye dayes have brokyn my hart ;
My lust, my youth dyd then departe,
And blynd desyre of estate ;
Who hastes to clyme seeks to reuerte :
Of truthe circa Regna tonat ³⁵

Here he confirms from bitter experience, the traditional truisms about court-life.

But Wyatt was *essentially* of the court. His world was claustrophobically hemmed in, confined, for new worlds were yet to be discovered. His poetry opened no fresh, untrodden vistas of far-flung experience as in Donne's

Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone.³⁶

Yet, for poetic enactment of intensely felt psychological discords; of a dreadful knowledge of the reality beyond the convention; of the credibility gap between the professed ideals and court actualities, Wyatt has no rivals in Tudor times. In Poem No. 176 (Devonshire Ms) he rejects 'fame' in death for himself.

For hym death greep the right hand by the croppe
That is moche knowen of other; and of him self alas,
Doth dye unknownen, dazed with dreadfull face.³⁷

Judged by the evidence of his songs, lyrics and sonnets, Wyatt must have died with full knowledge of himself and of his milieu. At least, in his writings he had dragged himself clear of the guileful Tudor Court. In his knowledge of the painful contradictions within and without him lies his essential significance for us.

NOTES

1. Humanism and Poetry in the Early Tudor Period—H. A. Mason, p. 201.
2. Collected Essays of Sir Thomas Wyatt, ed. Kenneth Muir. No. 84.
3. Petrarch's Sonnet—'To son si stanco sotto il fascio antico'.
4. Ibid. ref. 2.
5. Ibid. ref. 1.
6. Devonshire Ms. No. 173 ed. K. Muir.
7. Egerton Ms. No. 4 ed. K. Muir.
8. Do. No. 77.
9. Humanism and Poetry in the Early Tudor Period—p. 185.
10. Collected Poems of Thomas Wyatt ed. K. Muir. Introd. p. xx.
11. Secular Lyrics of the 14th & 15th Centuries, ed. R. H. Robbins No. 169.
12. Tottel's Miscellany, Vol. 1 ed. H. E. Rollins—p. 93.
13. Devonshire Ms. No. 143.
14. Early Tudor Poetry, E. M. Berdan.
15. Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court, John Steevens. p. 207.
16. The Poetry of Wyatt, D. W. Harding.
17. Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court, John Steevens.
18. Devonshire Ms. No. 176.
19. Egerton Ms.—Sonnet No. 7 ('Whose list to haunt').
20. Ibid.
21. Collected Poems of T. Wyatt, ed. K. Muir, p. 245.
22. Ibid. p. 250.
23. Egerton Ms. No. 35

24. Collected Poems of T. Wyatt, Satire III.
25. Egerton Ms. No. 44
26. Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sergio Baldi, p. 36.
27. Egerton Ms. No. 37.
28. Tottel's Miscellany, Vol. I
29. Egerton Ms. No. 76
30. Ibid. No. 68
31. The Poetry of Wyatt, D. W. Harding (Pelican Guide to English Literature, Vol. I, p. 193)
32. Egerton Ms. No. 23
33. Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the 17th Century, ed. Grierson, p. 12.
34. The Courtly Maker, R. Southall, p. 44
35. Blage Ms. No. XLiii
36. Donne's 'Good Morrow' in 'Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems'.
37. Devonshire Ms. No. 176.

ROBERT GREENE'S *ORLANDO FURIOSO*, A ROMANTIC COMEDY

TETSUMARO HAYASHI

The puzzling and unsolved textual problems due largely to the substantial discrepancies between the two quartos (*A*, 1594 and *B*, 1599) and the Alleyn Manuscript seem to have prevented most scholars from seriously discussing Greene's *Orlando Furioso* as literature. Although the play obviously does not command our respect as much as Shakespeare's romantic comedies certainly do—*The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*—perhaps a more attentive literary examination of the play is now in order.

Greene's play dramatizes the romantic love story found in Lodovico Ariosto's epic, *Orlando Furioso*; in the play Orlando goes insane through jealousy of his supposedly successful rival Medor and through his fury at Angelica who, he thinks, has betrayed him. At the palace of Marsillus, the emperor of Africa, several suitors have previously attempted to win Angelica's hand. The scene reminds one of the three caskets scene in *The Merchant of Venice*, although the latter is far more suspenseful and more skillfully structured than Greene's comedy. Orlando, drawn away from Charlemagne's court by the "fame of fair Angelica," is her choice, which her father, Marsillus, firmly endorses. Yet, her choice and her father's endorsement invite the fury of her unsuccessful suitors, some of whom then declare a war against Marsillus. In the courtly love tradition this reaction is more or less expected, and it functions as the exciting force in the plot.

Sacripant, a poorly drawn Machiavellian character, on the other hand, attempts to fulfil his Tamburlaine-like ambition by marrying Angelica in spite of her professed love for Orlando. "Sweet are the thoughts that smother from conceit," says Sacripant; similarly his chair is "a throne of majesty," and his thoughts are "drawn on a diadem." Thus he aspires to become "coequall with the gods." Flatly rejected by Angelica, however, Sacripant soon tricks Orlando into believing Angelica's seeming love affair with Medor and causing Orlando's subsequent madness. Yet, in the play Sacripant, unsuccessful in winning his lady and keeping his throne, is eventually destroyed by a "madman." If this play is a perversion of the Tamburlaine motif, it may also be a burlesque on the Senecan tragedy, a form popular in Greene's time.¹

Like Shakespeare in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, and like Kyd in *The Spanish Tragedy*, Greene uses insanity as an important theme, but he fails to achieve the tragic effects of Shakespeare and Thomas Kyd, whose Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedy* Greene is sometimes believed to be parodying. At any rate, Greene's use of Orlando's madness is conventional; yet he fails to make his madman more than a source of entertainment. In the first place Orlando's violence is so remarkable that he represents a slapstick element of the play. Unlike Shakespeare and Kyd, however, Greene achieves a humour of situation and manners without tragic impact; he tears a shepherd limb from limb offstage, for example, and reappears with a leg upon his shoulder, thinking that it is Hercules' club and that he is himself Hercules. In this situation, Greene's mock heroic tone stands out when the scene is supposed to be serious and pathetic as a result of Orlando's sudden madness. Thus his insanity is not at all tragic, but absurd, not pathetic but comical.

Secondly, Orlando's madness takes a more rhetorical turn. His hyperbolic ranting is of a classical and Senecan vein, especially in Act II, Scene ii. The hero feels "The flames of Aetna" rise in his heart; he calls Medor's servant, who has been forced to stay at his side, "a messenger of Ate." He bids him speak lest he should send the captive to "Charon's charge." While Sacripant's Man, disguised as a shepherd, tells Orlando about Angelica's love affair with Medor, the hero invokes the Arcadian nymphs and the nieces of Titan. His verbal blast reaches its climax in the Latin quotation from Mantuan's *Eclogues*, IV, 110-111: "*Foemineum seville genus, crudele, superbum*" ("To be born feminine is to be born a slave, inhuman and haughty")²

Greene seems to follow another Elizabethan dramatic convention, that a good woman is often mistaken for a disloyal bitch; thus he stresses the universal theme of appearance vs. reality. To enforce this theme, Greene depends more on situation than on characterization, since most of his characters are mere types, not complex individuals; much of their action deriving from an improbable situation in which love is subjected to severe and undeserving strain. Incredible as it is, Angelica's own father most willingly and most cruelly banishes her from his empire like Lear and helps the Twelve Peers of France find her for execution. He may represent "justice," but there is neither mercy nor the "milk of human kindness" in him. This kind of improbable element in the play effectively fortifies Greene's "appearance vs. reality theme," since it dramatizes the juxtaposed sense of values, as in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Measure for Measure*.

Greene's classical allusions also seem to be so heavily interwoven

into the text that they tend to prevent smooth flow, keen insight, emotional impact, and popular appeal. Perhaps Greene intended to ridicule Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* through Sacripant,, a villainous antagonist and a poorly drawn "pseudo-Tamburlaine." It is true that the villain has grand and wild dreams of love, power, and conquest, but he comes repentant to a premature ending, slain by Orlando in the single combat⁸

M. C. Bradbrook, who made an original observation on the structure of Greene's *Orlando Furioso*, points out several unique features of this romantic comedy. First of all, *Orlando Furioso* has the unity of an old wife's tale. Here Orlando is a "wandering knight," one of the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne who appear in the final scene; when the disguised Orlando fights with three of them, he is recognized as the man they have been seeking, the search for a lost comrade unifying the drama throughout. Furthermore, in the beginning of the play, four monarchs appear and woo Angelica in pompous, Tamburlaine-like terms, in each case concluding with the same couplets:

But leauing these such glories as they be,
I loue my lord, let that suffice for me. (11. 57-58)

Their wooing, Angelica's choice of Orlando, and the rejected suitors' fury and subsequent war against Marsillus similarly unify in a peace-chaos-war-peace cycle.

Secondly, the love-hate theme also unifies the play. Orlando's madness is caused by the wicked Sacripant, who plots to destroy the union between Orlando and Angelica by hanging love poems under the trees of the grove, and by thus suggesting Angelica's apparently secret love affair with Medor. Yet, in the end it is Orlando, who once sought to kill Angelica, who rescues her when she is about to be executed at the demand of the Peers of France. Thus the love-hate-restored-love cycle supports the structure, while echoing the peace-chaos-peace pattern of the work; in short, personal fate is microcosmic of the larger fortune and misfortune.

Thirdly, Melissa, a Good Fairy under the disguise of a poor old enchantress, charms Orlando to sleep with her wand and proceeds to recite her invocation in Latin to restore his sanity. Furthermore, Orlando himself recites Italian when he is insane; impossible as it seems, he beats the clowns and later leads an army of clowns equipped with spits and pans to victory. At the climax he re-enters, dressed as a "poet" and preparing to storm both heaven and hell while comparing himself to Hercules and Orpheus. This attempt to unify old fairy-tales with an Italian plot, with scraps of Latin and Italian learning, and borrowings

from the popular Ariosto, is glued together by such stage devices as the procession of kings by Orlando's rivals at the beginning, and by the combat of the Twelve Peers at the end. The play's natural harmony lies in its fairy-tale fantasy, an element which binds the play together in spite of such obvious shortcomings as an improbable situation, unmotivated action and insufficiently developed characters, and a heavy and undiscerning use of classical allusions.⁴

To sum up, Greene's *Orlando Furioso* relies heavily on the following dramatic devices: (1) an abundant and sustained use of accident, coincidence, and chance, as in Orlando's timely recovering and saving of Angelica; (2) a frequent but not fully successful use of disguise on the part of several characters, including Orlando (as "a mercenary soldier"), Angelica (as "a poor woman"), Marsillus and Mandrecart (as "palmer"), and Sacripant's Man (as a "shepherd"); (3) a considerable use of magic and the supernatural in the fabrication of a romantic make-believe world as, for instance, in the good enchantress Melissa's representation of the fairy-tale element by suddenly restoring the hero to sanity and by revealing the truth about Sacripant, the author of Orlando's misfortune and the banishment of Angelica; and, finally, by a use of incredible, unaccountable, motiveless action, as in Marsillus' unhesitant endorsement of the Twelve Peers' intention to persecute his own daughter.

First, it is definitely Greene's weakness and/or immaturity as an artist that he fails to create the illusion of plausibility in the motivation of such characters as Orlando, Marsillus, Mandrecart, Sacripant, and Melissa. Yet his work, following the romantic tradition, is full of tenderness, goodness, mercy, and justice; it offers a glimpse of wickedness that triumphs temporarily. Second, there are no really wicked characters, such as Iago, Richard III, or Edmund. Third, the virtuous and innocent, who function as temporarily misunderstood victims of circumstances, are ultimately rewarded. Fourth, the ending is typified by forgiveness, reconciliation, and love, a dramatic convention which Shakespeare was to follow more successfully in his own romantic comedies.⁵

NOTES

1. Thomas H. Dickinson (ed.), *Robert Greene* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1909), p. xxxix.

2. Rolf Soellner, "The Madness of Hercules and the Elizabethans," *Comparative Literature*, 10 (1958), pp. 309-24.

3. John Clark Jordan, *Robert Greene* (New York : Octagon Press) 1915 (1965), pp. 179 ; 193-95. See also E. G. Woodbury, "Robert Greene : His Place in Comedy" in *Representative English Comedies* ed. by C. M. Gayley (New York : Macmillan, 1916), pp. 385-94 ; Thomas Marc Parrott and Robert Hamilton Ball, *A Short View of Elizabethan Drama* (New York : Scribner's, 1943 (1968), p. 71.

4. M. C. Bradbrook, *The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy* (Baltimore : Penguin Books, 1955), pp. 77-78.

5. E. C. Pettett, *Shakespeare and the Romantic Tradition* (London : Staples Press, 1949), pp. 54-66.

S.T.C'S OSORIO—A DOCUMENT

JIBON BANERJEE

Coleridge's second venture in the world of drama was *Osorio, A Tragedy* (*Osorio, a Dramatic Poem*, according to MS. II; *Osorio, the Sketch of a Tragedy*, according to Ms. III.), the first being *The Fall of Robespierre*—a joint effort with Robert Southey. The second one is a poorer play indeed. Most Coleridge scholars have ignored *Osorio* and devoted more attention to *Remorse*, a revised version of the first draft—which was written sixteen years later, in 1813. But the first draft is an important document in that it highlights some political and personal interests of the poet and the background of this play-writing records some interesting facts about the poet's struggle for a dramatic career. This is not to say that *Remorse* does not deserve fuller attention. The revised version is definitely a better play, enriched with important additions and alterations and, what is more significant, it was staged on London Drury Lane board, running for twenty successful nights. But, unlike *Remorse*, the first draft covers all the favourite territories of Coleridge.

To start with a minor fact, it is a curious coincidence that both Wordsworth and Coleridge were engaged at the same time to write each a five act tragedy, *Borderers* and *Osorio* respectively. In the words of a critic: 'the two poets were simultaneously sickening for the poetic measles'.¹ This refers to their longing for a successful dramatic career. Coleridge visited William and Dorothy, living at Racedown then, on June 6, 1797. While describing this meeting Dorothy informs Mary Hutchinson at one place of her letter; ".....and after tea he repeated to us two and a half acts of his tragedy *Osorio*. The next morning William read his tragedy the *Borderers*."² About the same time, on June 8, 1797, Coleridge excitedly writes to Joseph Cottle: "Wordsworth admires my Tragedy—which gives me great hopes. Wordsworth has written a Tragedy himself..."³ The play was begun at Nether Stowey in March, 1797⁴ and finished by the second week of October in the same year. This is clear from a letter written to John Thelwall on October 14.⁵ It is interesting anyway that it was Robert Brinsley Sheridan who had urged Coleridge through a friend Bowles to write a Tragedy for his theatre (he was the Manager of the Drury

Lane theatre at the time). Coleridge reminded him that he 'was utterly ignorant of all stage-tactics', but Sheridan 'had promised that he would himself make the necessary alterations'. The play was submitted to Sheridan and was rejected on the grounds of "the obscurity of the three last acts."⁶ This was a cause of life-long lamentation by Coleridge and complaint against the 'gay lessee of Drury Lane'. Coleridge's charge that he did not receive an answer from Sheridan is not true,⁷ though the charge that the Ms was never returned is true,⁸ for Coleridge did receive an answer after six weeks, perhaps through Linley, Sheridan's brother-in-law. Anyhow, Coleridge himself was not confident about the play's merit and wrote to W. L. Bowles that the plan he had sketched for his tragedy was 'too chaotic to be transmuted then, that it was 'romantic & wild & somewhat terrible ; and that he would have Siddons and Kemble in his mind.'⁹ This only means that he worked hard at the tragedy and made such a slow progress that it drew a pinching remark from Charles Lamb : "I hope you are only Coleridgeizing when you talk of finishing it...Shakespeare was a more modest man".¹⁰ He himself was exasperated. 'It is done', wrote Coleridge, "and I would rather mend hedges and follow the plough, than write another".¹¹ All this shows that he had reasons to be shocked by the rejection, and Sheridan's suggestion that some revision might make it fit for the stage did not at all console him, for in a touching letter to George Coleridge, the brother with whom he had the closest relationship, Coleridge refers to Sheridan's character in an uncharitable manner : 'I know the man's character too well, to suffer myself to be inflated by hope'-and 'In all probability, Mrs. Sheridan has made thread papers with it. It has not given me one pang: for some who know Sheridan intimately, had prepared me to expect it". It is true that, despite the defects, Sheridan had not treated him with common justice ; otherwise he would not have caricatured the two lines (may be an excellent summary rather than a travesty, as Campbell remarks) to hurt the feelings of an aspiring poet-dramatist. It happened like this : a speech in *Osorio* (Act IV, Scene i), by Ferdinand begins thus :

Drip ! Drip ! Drip ! Drip !—in such a place as this

It has nothing else to do but drip ! drip ! drip !

This Sheridan parodied as : 'Drip ! drip ! drip ! there is nothing here but dripping'.¹² Admittedly, Coleridge's original draft contained these lines, though he was confused (not 'pretended' as Campbell suggests) and said that actual version was 'Drip ! Drip ! a ceaseless sound of water drops !' (It may be noted here that Coleridge corrected the original version in MS III.)¹⁴ Still it was a malicious act to try to raise

laughter and delight a large distinguished company by misquoting a specimen in the Green Room after ten years, out of context, leaving aside the whole play, written at his own request by one 'who had devoted the firstlings of his talents to the celebration of Sheridan's genius' and who 'never spoke severely of R. B. S. but once' and then he confessed that he did say also 'that Sheridan was Sheridan'.¹⁵ Therefore, it would not be unfair to say that this ridicule was unbecoming of a man of Sheridan's stature. In fact, the assumption that 'Sheridan never actually saw *Osorio* when it was first presented to Covent Garden Committee, and that 'presumably the play was rejected solely on Linley's authority' cannot be brushed aside. Further, Sheridan's charge against Coleridge for not revising the play due to obstinacy can not stand to reason as the poet had given him absolute power for alteration, addition and omission.¹⁷ So, the subsequent offers of Sheridan and his promises to fit the play for the stage amounted, it seems, to teasing an honestly ambitious man. Coleridge never doubted that the promise would be kept more in breach and at the same time he never forsook the idea of re-writing the play for suitable representation on the stage.¹⁸ Sheridan's making all old offers over again after three years touched a sore point in Coleridge, so much so that he could not resist calling him the 'unprincipled Rogue'¹⁹ and 'a damned impudent Dog'.²⁰

True, one reason of Coleridge's not abandoning the idea of altering *Osorio*, besides and despite deceptive encouragement from Sheridan, was his consciousness of the play's superiority to the works of the modern dramatists of his time and also of the play's 'style'.²¹ Yet, strangely, he writes in the Preface to the MS of *Osorio* that 'in this sketch of a tragedy', 'all is imperfect and much obscure', pointing to its 'other equally great defects'. Therefore, we have to look deeper to find out some other reasons behind his soft corner for this 'imperfect' and 'obscure' tragedy. We know that Coleridge, like Wordsworth and other well-read contemporaries, was subject to the spell of German dramas, especially of Schiller and Kotzebue. Thus, when the learned poet accepted Sheridan's proposal to write a tragedy, the handy model he had already in mind was Schiller's *Die Räuber* (translated from German as *The Robbers* by A. F. Tytler, London 1792) and the Sicilian story of Jerenymo and Lorenzo in Schiller's work. (This play was being staged in London then.) *Die Räuber*, *Geisterseher* was not only the work of his 'Bard tremendous in sublimity', it also contained accounts of strange Gothic phantasms, Swedenborgian reveries and the animal magnetism of Mesmer and Lavator and the impostures of

Cagliostro. All these were favourite interests of the English poet, though as a source of the play's historical background he depended on Robert Watson's *History of the Reign of Philip the Second, King of Spain*, (London, 1785, 4th edition.) In certain respects the villain Osorio may be compared with Franz Moor of *The Robbers* like Wordsworth's Oswald, though in points of selfishness and cynicism, Schiller's character far surpasses Coleridge's and Wordsworth's. Franz Moor is "not a man"; as Coleridge describes the psychological make-up of his reasoning villain. "who from constitutional calmness of appetites, is seduced into pride and the love of power, by these into misanthropism, or rather a contempt of mankind and from thence, by the co-operation, of envy, and a curiously modified love for a beautiful female (which is nowhere developed in the play), into a most atrocious guilt."³³ Rather the scene (Raii. Act II. Sc i & ii) in *The Robbers* where Hermann is incited by Franz Moor to deceive a girl has a real point of resemblance with the similar scene in *Osorio*, (Act II, Scene i) when Ferdinand is persuaded by Osorio to play false with Maria. Then the dialogue of Velez spoken to Maria in Act IV ("Repent and marry him—or to the convent" line 294) is a clear echo of the threatening words of Franz aimed at Amalia. In Act IV a scene changes to the mountains by moonlight where Alhadra and a number of Morescoes secretly meet and decide to take revenge on Ferdinand's murderer. This vividly reminds Femgericht. These similarities are not accidental but more due to the English poet's irresistible urge to give a taste of Schiller's dramatic power which had impressed him much at that time,³³ though this impression was never steady.³⁴ His reference to Kotzebue, the popular German playwright, in a letter to Wynn. dated April 5, 1799, as an "unsurpassed and unsurpassable genius" is a proof of the impact of the sensationalism of Kotzebue's melodramas which is amply reflected in *Osorio*. His own remark about *Osorio* at an early stage of its composition that "It is romantic and wild and somewhat terrible" has reference to his fascination of Kotzebueism. (Ref. Review of *The Monk* in the *Critical Review*, Feb., 1797.) That sensationalism was liked by the general theatre goers of his time is an established fact. Coleridge could not help following this tradition of the English theatre to cater to the common tastes. Otherwise, the dialogues in Act V between undisguised Albert and repenting Osorio (Lines 235- 65) and between kneeling Maria and militant but merciful Alhadra (289-299) would not have been written by Coleridge. Then, the good old Shakespeare and some other Jacobean playwrights were never absent from his mind and echoes from Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*

(half ascribed to Shakespeare and half to Fletcher), *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* can be heard often ringing in the play.

We have seen that both Wordsworth and Coleridge were simultaneously engaged in writing tragedy. Since Wordsworth's disenchantment with Godwinian principles is writ large in the *Borderers* and Coleridge's dissociation with his previous admiration for *Political Justice* coincides with this, it does not seem improbable that in their Nether-Stowey meeting in April, one of the topics discussed was Godwinian doctrine. In a letter written at the time Coleridge drops a hint: "I employ myself now on a book of Morals in answer to Godwin, and on my own Tragedy".²⁵ In an issue of April 2, 1796 of *Watchman* we find a letter published by Coleridge in which he considers, "Mr. Godwin's principles as vicious; and his book as a pander to Sensuality".²⁶ Hence it will be plausible to suppose that Coleridge was eager to incorporate his current resentment against Godwinian rationalism in his play, being inclined, as has been pointed out a little earlier, towards strange phantasms and Swedenborgian reveries. For evidence we may read between the lines spoken by Albert and Osorio on the topic of remorse in Act V. The Gothic interests in which Coleridge was currently involved emotionally also cast their large shadows on the various scenes and stage directions of the Tragedy.

The point we want to drive home, therefore, is this that all the hoardings of Coleridge's reading of the above-mentioned works entered more consciously than unconsciously into the whole creative process of *Osorio* as nowhere else. But the tragedy is worth our consideration from two other angles—political and personal.

"The one conspicuously political tragedy".²⁷ Schiller's *Rauber* was more than the prototype of storm and stress drama. The German dramatist's youthful radical ideas, his protest against the political tyranny of Duke Karl Eugen of Wurttemberg, his character portrayal of the revolting Kosinsky and the Moor's speeches (I, II) could not have failed to stir the imagination of Coleridge. Alhadra's concluding speech in *Osorio* ("This arm should slake...and still to conquer". V, 313-20) despite its melodramatic ring, clearly shows that Coleridge also meant this play to be a challenge against the political forces of his day. It may be that the role of the Inquisition in suppressing the freedom of the people and persecuting the Morescoes agitated the mind of Coleridge so deeply that he found relief and strength in Schiller's fellow-feeling. (Ref. the Moor's speech to the priest: *The Robbers*; III, III).

In Francesco, the Inquisitor, Coleridge must have put the image of Pitt. The poet's political views of the contemporary administration,

his disillusionment at the extreme reforming zeal of the French revolutionary leaders, his remarks against the infallibility of the Pope and the power of the Inquisition are evident in his political writings of the period.²⁸ Francesco thinks that he is 'tender-hearted', but Maria can see him through when she calls him "gross, ignorant, and cruel!" He thinks, like the Pope and Pitt that his idealistic actions will benefit the Church and the nation but actually he is a power-loving, self-centred careerist (refer to his exclamation: Yes! Yes! I have the key of all their lives...honour me", II, 263-266). Coleridge must have remembered the arrests of Horne Tooke and John Thelwall in 1794 when he began *Osorio* with a scene of an unjustified imprisonment of Ferdinand for the choice of his religion and making Alhadra tell the story of her arrest with her infant 'solely for my complexion'. Further, the famous 'Foster-mother's Tale' in *Osorio* has a direct bearing on Coleridge's repulsion for the religious intolerance, despotic acts and superstitious attitudes (IV), though the scene does not contribute to the action of the drama. Coleridge's views as expressed in his *Essays on His own Times* (I, 7) that "a nation wading to their rights through blood, and marking the track of freedom by devastation" have evident resemblance to Albert's attitude in the Dungeon scene. In fact, Albert's soliloquies not only often recall Hamlet's, but also give an insight into Coleridge's intellectual and philosophical musings which are scattered in his poems and other writings. We can identify the ideas expressed by Maria, Velez and Foster-mother with those of Coleridge. Further, Coleridge's method of dealing with the political ills of his day was like Albert's: to rouse remorse in the heart of the enemy. Coleridge's Notebooks (I, No. 119) also reveals that he was influenced by Milton's works at the time. It was, therefore, natural for him to carry on the Miltonic method of protest against repressive measures, to curb freedom of expression which the Pitt ministry introduced apprehending danger of an impending revolution.

We have observed before that for the plot of *Osorio* Coleridge had to draw from *The Robbers* quite liberally. Apart from this, there may be a sentimental reason for his relying on Schiller's drama as a source of inspiration. It is a story of two brothers—one wronged. Circumstantial evidence leads us to the supposition that *Osorio* in some of his characteristics resembles Reverend George Coleridge, eight years older than Samuel Taylor Coleridge, his famous younger brother. We should emphasize the words 'in some of his characteristics' because Coleridge could never look upon his brother as an out-and-out villain. On the other hand, his letters to his elder brother are full of gratitude and affection; to whom only he could go for relief at the time of distress.

Coleridge's analysis of Osorio's character (ref-Preface) quoted previously, has perhaps something to do with his conclusion about George's character. A weak man in truth who duped himself into the belief that he had a soul of iron and who had mistaken his constitutional abstinence from vices for strength of character—these are the common characteristics shared by George and Osorio. The main ground for this conclusion about his elder brother is this that George could never sympathize with the idealistic ventures, emotional involvements and philosophic meanderings of his poet-brother, although he always nursed the softest corner for him. An example ; when Coleridge wanted to emigrate to America to experiment with his Pantisocracy, George warned him that it was sheer fit of insanity.²⁹ At the time of his financial stringency Coleridge's last resort was this brother who quite justifiably sometimes reprimanded him for this self-inflicted misery. Though hurt, Coleridge never lost regard for George, and that is why he imagined himself as Albert, who had grievances against Osorio and yet forgave him. The ambivalence here is not far to seek. More often than not it was Coleridge who was guilt-conscious—at least he ought to have been—for injuring the feelings of his affectionate elder brother by his misbehaviour and disobedience. Hence, to see George as Albert and Coleridge as Osorio at times will not be going against the real life situation.

Now, these attitudes of George and Coleridge for each other are clearly reflected in many a letter exchanged between them. Once Coleridge waited for his brothers to make arrangements for his release from the dragoons. "Pardon me, my more than brother I" Coleridge wrote to his elder brother, "if it be the sickly jealousy of a mind sore with 'self-contracted miseries'—but was your last letter written in the same tone of tenderness—with your former ! Ah me ! What awaits me from within and without....."³⁰ The misunderstanding was so deep that he immediately wrote to George : "Farewell ! my brother....."³¹ But this break with his brother was made up by the summer of 1796. We cannot help remembering here Osorio's musings ;

(In a slow voice with a reasoning laugh). Love-love and then we hate—and what ? and wherefore ? Hatred and love. Strange things ! both strange alike !

(III, 211-212)

In certain respects Valez also recalls the imposing nature of George, well-meaning but despotic. Valez wants Maria to marry Osorio for future security. This is a proof of affection, as well as of imposing one's will on an unwilling mind. (I, 19-51). We also remember Osorio's bargaining for Ferdinand's gratefulness and Albert's offers of services at the begin-

ning of the Act II (L. 277) as resembling similar situations faced by Coleridge in his real life.

But these circumstantial evidences cannot be pushed too far to identify completely Osorio with George or Albert with Coleridge. It was perhaps a compensating wish-fulfilment on the part of Coleridge to enjoy a dream victory over a brother who proved to be superior to him in strength of character. This moral revenge he could take only by dramatizing the characters of his brother and his own self. Thus, we have reason to believe that his purpose was served.

We must not also forget that *Osorio* is the first full length treatment of the theme of the *Ancient Mariner*. Albert declares to Osorio : "He that can bring the dead to life again" etc. This can be done through remorse only. The lines :

And all alone set sail by silent moonlight
up a great river, great as any sea. (IV, 231-32)

remind us of its relation to both *Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla-Khan*.

Incidentally, we may refer here to some lines from and a quotation in *Osorio* (V, 53-56) in a letter which reminds of Coleridge's well-known love for Hindu mysticism, particularly his fascination for the mythological idea that God—a pure Intelligence and the Creator, is sitting on a floating lotus :

I should much wish, like the Indian Vishnu, to float about along an infinite Ocean cradled in the flower of Lotus, and wake once in a million years for a few minutes—just to know that I was going to sleep a million years more. I have put this in the mouth of Alhadra my Moorish woman...

...It were a lot divine in some small skiff
Along some ocean's boundless solitude
To float for ever with a careless course,
And think myself the only Being alive !

Alhadra's wish "that my soul/could drink in life from the universal air !" (V, 50-51) also reminds us of Coleridge's interest in Berkeley's theory that 'aether'—the mysterious substance to many 18c scientists—was a vital spirit in the universe.

However, when all is said and done about the self-revelation of Coleridge in *Osorio* and in spite of Bowles's writing on a blank page of MS III that on the whole a very masterly production...might be rendered an interesting Drama on the stage,⁵² the fact cannot be denied that *Osorio* is inferior as a drama. But fortunately, Coleridge was fully conscious of the defects of *Osorio* as proved by various remarks he made to friends and in the Preface. He often

felt" an indescribable disgust...at the mention of the tragedy.⁸³ The drawbacks of the first version are too many to mention. The poor construction of the plot, incongruous impossible situations, grave mistakes in 'stage direction, incredible choice of locale and above all errors in dramatic composition mar the poetic beauties, philosophical reflections and psychological insights that abound in the play. All these drawbacks he wanted to remove and make it fit for stage representation. In fact, he worked hard on the play for sixteen years and made substantial corrections, added Prologue and Epilogue, changed the title, the locale and names of the *Dramatis Personae*. But the plot remained unchanged. As a recast of *Osorio*, *Remorse* was published in 1813 and happily for all concerned was first staged at Drury Lane theatre on January 23, 1813 through the efforts of Byron.⁸⁴ It ran successfully for twenty nights—no mean achievement for a poetic playwright of the Nineteenth Century. More honourable was the fact that it was selected by Alexander, a famous actor of the time, and who played the role of Don Ordonio, for performance on his 'Benefit night'—on 14 April, 1817. It is no less significant that some of the leading literary figures of the time, besides Wordsworth and Lamb, hailed *Remorse* as a distinguished contribution to dramatic literature. "We have nothing", remarks Byron, "to be mentioned in the same breath with *Remorse* for very many years; and I should think that the reception of that play was sufficient to encourage the highest hopes of the author and audience".⁸⁵ It was reckoned by Hazlitt as one of "the more legitimate and higher productions of the drama".⁸⁶ Leigh Hunt's compliment was more encouraging: "Mr. Coleridge's *Remorse* has been the only tragedy touched with real poetry for the last fifty years...there has been no complete production of the kind since the time of Otway..."⁸⁷ "In our days, among others, G. Wilson Knight calls *Remorse* a great play and a strangely iridescent creation."⁸⁸

An explanation is there for the change of the title from *Osorio* to *Remorse*. It is said that there was at that time in London a popular family called Osorio and hence the change. The title is significant too in that to both Wordsworth and Coleridge, to all major Romantic playwrights in fact, an abstract 'passion' counted first. Here, as in Wordsworth's *Borderers*, remorse is the guiding 'passion',

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2. *Early Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, (1787-1805), ed. Ernest de Selincourt (Oxford, 1935), p. 169.
3. *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. E. L. Griggs, Oxford, 1956, V. I. 325. Hereafter referred to as Griggs, etc.
4. See *Complete Poetical Works of S. T. C. E. H. Coleridge*, Vol II, p. 518. See also Griggs, I 316 n. 5. Hereafter referred to as C. P. W. etc.
5. Griggs, I. 352.
6. *The Athenaeum*, No. 3258, April 5, 1890, p. 446. (Coleridge's *Osorio* and *Remorse* by J. D. Campbell.) Campbell claims to have seen an unpublished letter of the poet written on December 2, 1797. (See also Griggs, I. 358),
7. Ibid.
8. J. D. Campbell learnt 'on excellent authority' that the MS was salvaged from the fire at Old Drury Lane in 1809. Coleridge's regret that he had no other copy of *Osorio* was proved baseless as he himself discovered, may be accidentally, a copy of the play among Godwin's papers. This he had previously presented to Mrs. Robinson. He later, however, admitted the fact in his Preface to *Remorse* (C. P. W., II. 812)
9. Quoted by E. K. Chambers in his *S. T. Coleridge—A Biographical Study*, (Oxford, 1950), p. 85.
10. *Works*, ed. E. V. Lucas; VI. 104.
11. *S. T. Coleridge—A Biographical Study*, [Oxford, 1950], E. K. Chambers, p-85.
12. Griggs, I, Letter No. 231, pp. 384-385.
13. See *The Athenaeum*. No. 3258, April 5, 1890 for an article on Coleridge's *Osorio* and *Remorse*, p 445, by J.D. Campbell
14. C. P., EHC, II, p 562 n
15. Ibid., Preface to *Remorse*, pp. 812-815n.
16. See *English Romantic Drama*, Richard M. Fletcher, (N.Y, 1966), p. 40
17. See Griggs, I, 603-604.
18. Ibid., See also Letter to Southey written on July 22, 1801, Griggs, II, 745.
19. Ibid, I, 606.
20. Ibid, I. 608.
21. Ibid., I, 356.
22. C P.W.. E.H.C., II, p. 1114 (Preface to the MS of *Osorio*)
23. See Griggs, I, 122.
24. On October 7, 1800, Coleridge writes to a friend, "To be known to Schiller was a thought, that passed across my brain and vanished—I would not stir 20 yards out of my way to know him." Italics Coleridge's.
Griggs, I, 628, See also *Anima Poetae*, ed. E.H. Coleridge (1895)
25. Griggs, I, 320.
26. Ibid., I, 199-200.
27. *A History of German Literature* (Edin., 1949), J. G. Robertson, p. 333.
28. *Essays on His own Times*, ed. S. Coleridge (1850), Vol 1 62
29. Griggs, I, 118
30. Ibid, I, 67
31. Ibid, I, 78, See also J E G P, 1962, p 258

32. C. P. W., E. H. C. 11, p. 597 n.

33. Griggs, I, 356.

34. Byron was appointed a member of the Drury Lane Theatre Management Committee. But he did not (or could not) do much and 'accepted the responsibility as a matter of business affairs...' (See 'The Revival of Poetic Drama', E. Gosse, *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 90, p. 160). 'However he exerted his influence to get *Remorse* staged, and suggested that there was a good opening for tragedy in London. Strangely, Byron bitterly satirized Coleridge in *Don Juan*, IXCL, 7, 8; 'Cex 2-4; IIL XcIII, 5-8; Coleridge himself had also no high opinion of Byron's poetry See "Coleridge and Byron", E L Griggs, *PMLA*, LXV (1930), pp 1085-1097

35. *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*, VOL, 3, (London, 1898-1901) pp 191-192.

36. W. Hazlitt, *Collected Works* (Dent, 1903) VOL 8 p 416 He of course qualified his praise later and commented 'a spurious tragedy' (Ibid., p. 421.)

37. *Leigh Hunt's Dramatic Criticism*. (1808-1831), ed. L. H. Houtchens and C.W. Houtchens (N. Y., 1949), p. 103.

38. See *The Starlit Dome*, G. Wilson Knight, (London, 1959), p. 143.

EXAMINING XANADU : KUBLA KHAN REVISITED

ROBERT F. FLEISSNER

In her interesting study *The Waking Dream*,¹ Patricia M. Adair probes into the traditional symbolism of Coleridge's opium reverie, as Kathleen Raine² and G. Wilson Knight, among others, have done in the past, concluding that the key symbol of the pleasure-dome therein relates to the "Earth Mother" imagery in the poem. Her view, that the dome suggests the mammary gland, even as does the reference to "The milk of Paradise" at the end presumably, is not one that has won universal acceptance. For instance, Gerald E. Enscoe³ objects that the adjective used to describe the erection, namely *statelily*, hardly applies to the breast of the female. Be that as it may, during the time in which the poem was composed—long before Freud—the image of the dome much more readily signified the heavens. In ancient Persia domes were traditionally colored blue or black for this reason. Freudian symbolism can thus be overplayed. But, in questioning the validity of some of the symbolic interpretation of *Kubla Khan*, we may yet find that a certain amount of stress upon psychological counterpoint in the poem is useful. For the fact that the poem was purportedly composed in a kind of dream lends itself to psychological interpretation ; it suggests that unconscious forces were at play. John Livingston Lowes, and others following in his wake, have steered their critical vessels into the waters of Coleridge's past reading with no small success. But if the influences upon the poet were truly unconscious, they would reflect more universal appeal than what can be ascertained merely from his reading of travelogues and the like. For example, if there is indeed a reflection of the spiritual concept of a heavenly dome in the poem, as I have intimated above, a thorough examination of the theme of Creation in it might prove quite valuable.

George Watson⁴ has argued that *Kubla Khan* is fundamentally a poem about the writing of poetry, but if that is so there is more to the Creation theme than Watson visualizes. That Coleridge had the idea of creation in mind is evident not only from the final (capitalized) word in the poem, *Paradise*, but from the well-known echoes of Milton's *Paradise Lost* therein. (Elsewhere I am showing that the Miltonic influence may actually be more via the shorter *Lycidas*, but no one denies the import of Milton's epic here, and it is certainly germane to the issue at hand.)

The garden of the Khan is described in terms of an enclosure similar to the original Edenic one, a *hortus conclusus* image. One curious aspect of the Edenic motif in *Kubla Khan* is the symbol of the spiral, which was formerly associated with the creative process in the Egyptian system of hieroglyphics; the spiral is observed in the serpentine decor of the poem, the "sacred river" meandering along with its characteristic "mazy motion." The spiral image also conjures up, as it were, the serpent of first prelapsarian and then of apocalyptic times, reminding the reader that the name of the river, Alph, is meant to reflect the Biblical Alpha and Omega (as well as Alpheus). Yet in terms older and possibly more "archetypal" than organized Christianity, the spiral river image is serpentine and all-encompassing in another sense: it connotes the world as a serpent with its tail in its mouth. In a similar manner, the poem's "mighty fountain" would suggest the basis of Creation itself, namely the *fons (et origo)* of all things.

Symbolism pertaining to the female is prominent in *Kubla Khan*, and not just in terms of questionable mammary gland imagery. Woman is represented first as "wailing for her demon-lover"; then she is revealed as the "damsel with a dulcimer." Both descriptions describe her two roles: wild and tame, Lilith and Eve. Female imagery has at least three main significations here: (1) she is the siren type, relating thereby to the rebellious element in Nature; (2) she stands for the Earth Mother (*magna mater*); (3) she finally connotes the so-called unknown damsel or the anima as described in the psychology of Jung. For even though Coleridge knew no more about Jung than he did about Freud, on the unconscious level certainly the universal formulations of past times that were later categorized by Jung could have inspired Coleridge in his own characteristic "romantic" way. Let us therefore examine these three points.

Of the three aspects of womanhood evident in *Kubla Khan*, the second and third are most prominent. Though it is possible that the wailing woman refers to the image of the lamia as representative of rebellious Nature, it is doubtful that the poet had anything quite like a *femme fatale* in mind. For the wailing woman does not divert man from the path of evolution as the first type is said to do, yet romantically she may still have such hidden potentiality. It can be argued that the siren type seeks, not a demon-lover, but a man whom she wishes to enslave, but if she is capable of enslaving a lover of a tutelary spirit, or such a spirit that has become a lover, she may acquire greater booty.

The second feminine type, the earth goddess, is prevalent thematically throughout the poem. Richard Gerber⁵ recently found an affinity

of Coleridge's *Kubla* to the fertility goddess Cybele (the names, he finds, are similar), but he has been questioned on this score by H. H. Meier.⁶ Coleridge himself, it should be pointed out, used the phrase *this earth* in the poem, but the primary love object is most likely not the *magna mater* as much as the female love object in the more common sense. In his response to Professor Gerber, Meier contended that rather than a Cybele symbol, the female element in *Kubla Khan* recollects Venus and the Adonis motif. Meier even sees a hidden anagram in the name *Abora* (i.e., *a boar*, an Adonis symbol), though it might also be argued that Coleridge shifted the spelling from *Amora* (originally *Amara* as in Milton's epic) because of too much amorous connotation. Anyway, it is arguable that the wailing woman and the damsel are not sexual objects for the Khan: he is not represented as being in pursuit of them, nor they in pursuit of him, regardless of what the final meaning of "pleasure-dome" may be. Toward the end of the poem, the speaker indicates that under the spell of the damsel's music he would become the lover, which means that he could be inspired beyond human comprehension. Thus the basic love theme is there, not as an end in itself, but rather as a means to suggest the spiritual. There can be no reasonable doubt that the damsel with the dulcimer stands for type (3), the anima of Jungian psychology, *das ewig Weibliche* too.

Aside from imagery pertaining to the female, there is much reference to eternity in *Kubla Khan*. Though some of this symbolism has been duly pointed out before, a few new points can be added. First of all, such expressions as *measureless to man* are striking. Let us add now *at once and ever*. There is a roar of eternity in that final word *ever*, suggestive of the sea stretching on and on over the horizon. Coleridge has often been cited for his interest in the neoplatonic ideal of reconciling opposites, and so the symbols not only of caverns and dome, but of sun and moon claim our attention: they were already used by Roman emperors to signify things eternal. Certain Roman coins, to be specific, showed a girl holding the sun and moon in her hands as symbolic of the Infinite. In alchemical thought, likewise, eternity was deemed obtainable only through the abolition of contraries and their final fusion, the alchemical *Opus* having been designated a "conjunction". Further juxtaposition of reconcilable opposites is evident in reference of the poet, almost in the same breath, to the holy and pagan, to sunshine and ice, to Lilith as the wailing woman and to Eve as the calmer dulcimer damsel.

From the outset a paramount image in the poem is water symbolism, again a Jungian device. We hear the gushing of the "sunless sea" with its *esses*, the sacred river and its waves, the turmoil of the fountain.

The serpentine flow of the sacred river easily recalls the Chinese belief that the waves were the abode of dragons. The Chinese monster was said to come from the waves not just because their undulating effect relates to the symbol of the serpentine, of course, but because life has been said to originate from the waters, which are the beginning and end, the *Alpha* and *Omega* of everything. With regard to some of the *magna mater* imagery, the water may also suggest the amniotic fluid. Moreover water was related to intuitive wisdom by ancient thinkers, specifically the "abyss of water" which signifies the Unfathomable itself. "Water primeval" comes to mind. That the river is called "sacred" suggests such commonplaces as baptismal water, possibly even holy water as a Sacramental (compare the reference also to incense), but in a larger sense water as a divine flow throughout the religions of the world. A well-known neo-Jungian writes as follows :

To quote Evola, in *La tradizione ermetica* : "Without divine water, nothing exists, according to Zosimus. On the other hand, among the symbols of the female principle are included those which figure as origins of the waters (mother, life), such as : Mother Earth, Mother of the Waters, Stone, Cave, House of the Mother, Night, House of Depth, House of Force, House of Wisdom, Forest, etc. One should not be misled by the word 'divine.' Water symbolizes terrestrial and natural life, never metaphysical life."⁷

Here the suggestion is that water is related more to the natural than to the supernatural ; still, if it is divine or sacred, it is allied to the spiritual just the same : *Alles Vergangliche tis nur ein Gleichnis*.

With regard to imagery relating to fertility in *Kubla Khan*, since fecundity is symbolized frequently by the poppy, the recorded origin of the poem as a reverie brought on by a few grains of opium points to the source of the poem's fruitfulness. Water too, it might be remembered, has been traditionally taken as a symbol of fertility, even as has the concept of vegetative growth. Forest symbolism, though extremely complex for this paper, does relate to the female principle discussed earlier and as such is related to the fertility theme as well. For it is in the forest where life can thrive in a virgin state, uncontrolled by the formalizing pressures of civilization (the male principle). Enchantment has often been said to have a sylvan basis. Interestingly enough, Werner Beyer's book on *Kubla Khan* is called *The Enchanted Forest*. The subject of the book, however, is less psychology than the impact of Wieland's *Oberon* upon Coleridge, a study in *Einfluss* that led the *TLS* reviewer to entitle his review of it "Herr Kubla ?"

There is a sacrificial aspect to forest lore too, especially when the tree symbol is taken to be equivalent to the sacrificial stake. Such ritualistic symbolism seems doubtful here, though, in spite of the other allusions to religion and infinity. The forest principally suggests Nature's growth and fructification, what was characteristic of the lush imagery of the Romantics. If the forest stands for the Unconscious itself, as has been said, so then may the fountain as well. When a fountain was found in the midst of a garden, as in *Kubla Khan*, Jung found it to be a symbol of the *Selbst*, or individuality. Compare, for instance, the *hortus conclusus* in the *Ars Symbolica* of Bosch.

Male-female polarity in the poem is worth consideration in more detail. The main male symbols are evidently the "walls and towers" girdling the garden round. These structures are notably masculine because of their formal, man-created nature. Frequently the image of the wall in literature suggests enclosure and hence frustration, and *Kubla Khan* is a poem of frustration at least insofar as the poet claims he never got the chance to complete his lyric in the manner he had hoped, having been interrupted by an untimely intruder from Porlock. To this it could be objected that Coleridge intended the poem as a romantic fragment, but since that is tantamount to considering his preface as a hoax, the objection may best be dismissed. Moreover, there is frustration in the poem because the speaker cannot reach the "Vision" of the damsel with the dulcimer and thereby become her spirit-lover. He is left far beyond her reach. Perhaps it would be most sensible to regard the wall symbolism from within rather than without, as standing for protection at least as much as for frustration. Vigilance would be needed with the impending peril implied by those "Ancestral voices prophesying war." The male-female polarity in *Kubla Khan* implies that there is no resolution from such opposition (and potential harmony) even as there is sometimes none in life itself. What emerges as dominant is the image of Kubla Khan himself, imperturbable and majestic, the masculine force prevailing over Nature.

DOCUMENTATION

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2. "Traditional Symbolism in *Kubla Khan*," *The Sewanee Review*, 72 (1964), 628-642.
3. "Ambivalence in 'Kubla Khan': The Cavern and the Dome," *Bucknell Review*, 12 (1964), 29-36.
4. "The Meaning of 'Kubla Khan'," *The Review of English Literature*, 2 (1961), 21-29.

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6. "Ancient Lights on Kubla's Lines," *English Studies*, 46 (1965), 15-29. (The controversy continued for awhile thereafter.)
7. J. E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, trans. from the Spanish by Jack Sage (New York, 1962), p. 347.

THE INFLUENCE OF FRENCH LITERATURE ON SWINBURNE

SUDESHNA CHAKRAVARTI

Tennyson once complained of English literature being corrupted by "poisonous honey stolen from France." This was evidently a serious accusation, at a time when publishers of French novels in England were being imprisoned, and Mr. Podsnap's view of "foreigners" was widely prevalent. In fact, the links of the Pre-Raphaelite movement with the slightly earlier French Romanticism did something to "diminish the isolation of the Victorian Romantics, to encourage a view of them according to which they, simply as Romantics, had great though remote and imperfectly recognised allies in European literature."¹ Swinburne, who believed—erroneously, it seems—that he had French blood in his veins, did most to bring about this "flank movement"² of the group. His mastery of French was enough to let him play a trick on the magazine "Spectator", passing off some of his own pieces as the work of imaginary French poets. An early admirer of Baudelaire and Gautier and a fervent worshipper of Victor Hugo, he did much to make these writers known in England, and his own poetry was sometimes influenced by, though never imitative of, these foreign models. In a way he made France his literary domain—Provence of the troubadours, Villon's Paris, where songs are made in the shadow of the gibbet, Baudelaire's Paris, stalked by ennui and death, the Louvre where the Parnassians dreamt of merging all arts into one grand whole, Hugo's sea coasts and barricades—as he made ancient Greece and Elizabethan England his own.

Swinburne was not a blind Francophile, showing rather, considerable taste and discrimination in his appreciation of a foreign literature. His comments on Matthew Arnold throw an interesting light on his own views in this respect. Arnold was no less an admirer of French culture, but according to Swinburne much of this admiration was for wrong reasons. "He sets up a national argument to prove why France should be, or why she is, weak in poetry and strong in prose : a very keen and clear argument, only the facts are all against it".³ A language that included Villon and Racine, Baudelaire and Hugo, could not be considered too badly off, as far as poetry was concerned. On the other hand, Swinburne had no hesitation in pulling down Arnold's French idols.

On Sainte Beauve he writes: "The late Mr. Matthew Arnold, who cannot in charity or in reason be supposed to have known much more of the man's [Sainte Beauve's] character than he knew of French poetry or Irish politics, had lavished so much praise on that incarnation of envy that the temperate and sparing phase in which Hugo has made that backbite's name immortal may probably give some surprise, if not some offence to English admirers—at second hand—of the versatile and venomous rhetorician"⁴. Still more ridiculous according to Swinburne, is Arnold's admiration for the French Academy and the "*Revue de deux Mondes*". "He seems actually to take them at their own valuation. Actually, French culture is vital in spite of these Institutions, not because of them." To crown all, Swinburne brought out lengthy reviews in French by an imaginary French writer, really himself. Here he mourned the English Samson, who, having smitten the Philistines of his own land, had fallen a prey to the Delilah of the French Academy. This is one of Swinburne's best essays, combining keen intellectual analysis with mischievous but friendly mockery (for except in peevish moments, he really respected Arnold). It is characteristic of the man that he should have called his *alter ego* across the channel, in his fight against the scholar whom he himself had called the "eye of English criticism",—though an eye blind in certain directions. We shall see more of the French *alter ego* later.

Arnold remained unrepentant. "I know...my sense of Hugo's poetry is [far] from satisfying Mr. Swinburne. But I am too old to change and too hardened to hide what I think". The "English Samson" did not forsake the French Delilah. Swinburne himself was not innocent of Philistinism, as far as his views of French culture were concerned. He was grossly unfair to Zola, whom he hated, as he hated Euripides. He underestimated the "fitful and fertile beauty of Alfred de Musset", not anticipating that "Lorenzaccio" would survive "Hernani". Though he appreciated Racine far more than most English critics, till very recent times, he could not escape the trap of a false and irrelevant Racine-Shakespeare antithesis. Still he was, with his friend Arthur Symonds, the best English critic of French literature in his own time and this literature was one of the most fruitful influences on his own writings. Perhaps it would be instructive to examine, chronologically, his relationship with different periods in French literary history.

Provence, the realm of civilization in the so-called Dark Ages, associated for ever with haunting memories of courtly love, troubadours, a darkly logical heresy and its ruthless suppression—associated also with the first suitable adaptation of Latin prosody in the Middle Ages—seems to have fascinated Swinburne, both thematically and materially. In his

most important "Provençal" poems, "In the Orchard", "The Triumph of Time" (and in other pieces also), he tries various Provençal metres, including the terza rima. The great difference between that medieval language and English was possibly a bar to complete success. In the context, it is worthwhile to quote Saintsbury's just and sympathetic remarks: "Such a rhyme-arrangement as that above set forth is probably impossible in English; even now it will be observed that Mr. Swinburne, the greatest master of double and treble rhymes that we have ever had, rarely succeeds in giving even the former with a full spondaic effect of vowel such as is easy in Provençal. In "The Garden of Prosepine" itself, as in the double rhymes, where they occur, of "The Triumph of Time", (the greatest thing ever written in the Provençal manner and greater than anything in Provençal) the second vowels of the rhyme are never full. And there, too, as I think, invariably in English, the poet shows his feeling of the intolerableness of continued double rhymes to making the odd verses rhyme plump and with a single sound".

For the rest, Swinburne found in Provençal the theme so close to his own heart, the Inevitable link between love and death, the creation of songs that perhaps survives both. For courtly love, the product of that civilization is by its very nature, opposed to life. The beloved is always another man's wife, so that there is no question of a sanctified union, a secure sharing of each other's days. The passion has the exaltation of the supreme values of a religion, yet it is lawless; the perfect continuation of such a love—perhaps Swinburne hints, of all loves—can only be death. Only the songs inspired by these emotions live on. Thus we have the stories of the wolf-woman who drove men mad with love, of the lady who ate the heart of her lover, killed by her jealous husband. The story of Jaufre Rudel de Bly, who seems to have been a historical as well as mythical figure, serves as an epitome of this culture. He was a troubadour who composed lays for his "princesse lointaine" (far-off princess) whom he saw only at the moment of his death. Other poets, Rostand, Heine, have treated poetically this story, which has become one of the enduring myths, besides that of Tristan and Iseult, Paolo and Francesca. "The Triumph of Time", he makes the centre of his own sorrows and thoughts. The singer and lover of the past is his brother and counterpart; that part is evoked in one of Swinburne's most famous verses:

There lived a singer in France of old,
By the tideless, dolorous, midland sea.
In a land of sand and ruin and gold
There shone one woman and none but she.

T. S. Eliot has criticized these lines for their vagueness, intellectual confusion. "You see that Provence here is reduced to the merest point of diffusion... He does not have his eye on a particular place". One might venture to disagree. Provence is evoked, not indeed with the sharp precision which Eliot would have desired, but with a deliberate, dream-like languor, suitable in the context. For it is not only Provence the place that appears, but the Provence moulded by centuries of literary tradition and extravagant imagination, the Provence with which the poet merges his own present. Yet it is unmistakably Provence—the juxtaposition of "a singer", "one woman" and "France of old" leaves no alternative, while a slight air of mystery is not dissipated.

"In the orchard" has a not dissimilar theme; the parting of lovers at day break, while the lady longs for death it is more elaborate than and the spirit somewhat different from that of the original.

Plagues a Deu Ja la : noitz non falhis

Ni men amies lonh de mi nosparties

Ni la guita jorn ni alba no vis

Oi Dieus ! Oi Dieus ! de L'alba tan tost ve l

(Would God, night might not be over, not my gentle friend depart from me, not the day arrive. Ah God ! Ah God ! that day should be so soon !')

Swinburne undoubtedly borrowed the situation and the last refrain, but the longing for death is his own addition. The original expresses no more than simple sorrow at a separation, perhaps a hope of reunion. Swinburne stresses that a moment of joy never returns and all after-life is an anti-climax. The idea, however, is not alien to the Provencal spirit. These poems, with all their faults, place Swinburne in the rank of native and adopted Provencal poets, from Daniel Arnaut, Pierre d'Auvergne, Rudel himself to Ezra Pound.

Francois Villon, the great criminal poet of fourteenth century France, caught Swinburne's imagination, not unnaturally. If Rudel was his brother as the fated singer-lover, Villon was his brother as the "poete maudit", cursed poet, turning to poetry his lawless life, the self-projected image of so many Romantics which Villon had carried to its logical extreme. "Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name" is the refrain of Swinburne's ballad on him. His translation of many of Villon's poems (Rossetti was also a translator) are examples of creative translation. One of them "La Ballade de la grosse Margot", was so outrageous, that even Swinburne did not dare to have the translation published in his own lifetime. From Villon, too, he seems to have learnt many literary techniques, the Rondel and Ballade so common in his poetry. In his Stuart plays, he brings in Chastelard, a minor Pleiade poet and con-

temporary of Ronsard, fatally associated with Mary, Queen of Scots. For this part, he composes some pieces of French on the Pleiade model.

The great neo-classical dramatists of seventeenth century France seem to have been more remote to Swinburne. He found in Moliere a peculiarly English spirit. He wrote a sonnet on Corneille's anniversary, commending specially the latter's portrayal of Roman and Spanish heroes, but it is not clear whether he understood the nature of Cornelian drama. He blamed Arnold for not appreciating "the narrow, shallow but very real melodies of Racine." While this underestimates Racine monstrously, it does prove a greater sensitivity to the French Alexandrine than many of his countrymen had shown. Also, if the adjectives are not taken in a merely pejorative sense, they indicate the particular quality of Racinian tragedy: intensity and extreme concentration within a deliberately chosen, narrow range. It is difficult to say if Swinburne's brief dramatic piece, "Phaedra", was influenced by Racine's "Phedre". The situation in both is the same—Phaedra, knowing the hopelessness of her sinful passion, snatches Hippolytus' sword, and demands that he should kill her. (In Euripides there is no such incident, and in Seneca, Hippolytus himself draws his sword, changing his mind when Phaedra welcomes death.) Certainly the clear-sighted, hopeless knowledge of fatality and sin has something Racinian in it.

The link between Swinburne and the French poets of the Parnassian school in the second half of the nineteenth century has been stressed often enough. Gosse declared that "Swinburne had been influenced by Theophile Gautier almost to excess"¹⁰ A lesser poet of the same school, Theodore de Banville, seems to have taught him some exotic and complex French metres."¹¹ Swinburne, always lavish with poetic tribute to other poets, wrote five poems concerning Gautier, the 'most luminous of all poets', (two in English, two in French, one in Latin), and two (in English and French) in memory of Banville. He must have found mental affinities with many of the Parnassians. Gautier's love of Pagan art, his sense of the beauty that was lost by the coming of Christianity, find an echo in Swinburne's famous line, 'Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean, the world has grown grey with thy breath.' The strange, morbid, fascinating studies of love and death by Cros, Heredia's statusque evocation of the past, Leconte de Lisle's rhythms of animal life, probably appealed to him. The exchange was not one-sided either, for Swinburne seems to have been a figure for emulation among the younger Parnassians. Catulle Mendes prefaced some of his own poetry with Swinburnian epigraphs.¹² Arthur Symons relates an amusing anecdote about a budding young poet in Paris, who

boasted that he had written twenty-syllable lines, then asked anxiously whether Swinburne had achieved the same feat.¹³

However, to take more important points, what were the common characteristics of the Parnassians, and how did these affect Swinburne? Some critics go so far as to affirm that there were no common features at all. "But the 'Parnassian school', so beloved of literary historians, is almost a figment of their own imagination. Gautier and Banville, Leconte de Lisle and Baudelaire stand for different concepts of poetry, and indeed of life....."¹⁴ This is certainly correct, but underestimates certain common ties among the second generation of French romantics. There was a certain impersonality, a reaction to the excessive subjectivism of the early romantics—(hearts worn on sleeves), and an insistence on the perfection of form, which was considered to be the soul of art. Beauty was the mastery of a difficult medium. Swinburne often erred in this respect, by looseness or excess, but his best poems do achieve a near perfection of form (in which case their lack of content is blamed). The Parnassians revived many medieval and *Pleiade* poetic forms submerged in France since the rise of neo-classicism and the predominance of the *Alexandrine*—the *rondeau*, the *ballade*, the *villanelle*, the *odelette* and others. Swinburne, it is generally admitted, owed some of his technical virtuosity to this metrical Renaissance in France.

The Parnassians were firm believers in "Art for Art's sake." This was perhaps their greatest difference with the early Romantics, most of whom were "committed" to one side or another, in the great contemporary struggles. Historians attribute the "Art for Art's sake" school, in some degree, to the reaction that set in, after the failure of the 1848 revolution. Since nothing else seemed worthwhile, art became autonomous, self-justifying. The preface to Gautier's "*Mademoiselle de Maupin*" was something like a manifesto in this direction. Swinburne wholeheartedly welcomed this alliance against the stuffy, rather Pharisaical moralism of Victorian England. "The business of art is not to do good on other grounds but to be good on her own," he asserts firmly in his essay on Blake. He rebuked Tennyson for his devotion to something which was not his task, and which in any case he did badly. There were, however, important differences between him and the most complete devotees of "Art for Art's sake." Most of the Parnassians were either wholly indifferent to social-political questions or hardened, even ferocious, conservatives (e.g. Gautier himself, Leconte de Lisle). Swinburne remained, at least for the greater part of his poetic life, a violent atheist, or rather anti-theist, and a passionate, if aristocratic, radical. Nor did he fail to express these ideas in a large part in his

poetry. His vision extended beyond the school of self-justifying art, which was not without its own danger, for what began as a fresh and stimulating revolt against dogmas itself trended to harden into a dogma.

If one feature distinguishes the Parnassians from other poets, it was their belief in the correspondence, interchangeability, of all arts. This did not simply mean that the same artist could practise different arts, as Michelangelo and Blake had done. It meant that one art could literally appropriate and express the essence of another. Gautier maintained that "in heaven, one man shall touch his poetry, another hear his sculpture, a third shall see his music". According to Baudelaire too, "what would be really surprising is that the sound should not be able to suggest the colour, that the colours should not be able to give the idea of the music and that the colour should be unfit to translate the ideas." Mallarmé's attempts to reduce poetry to pure music are well known. The kinship between such ideas and the Pre-Raphaelite experiments hardly needs to be stressed. Swinburne would probably have repeated with Baudelaire, "*Les parfums, les couleurs et le son se rendent*" (the perfumes, the colour and the sound respond to each other). His affinity with Mallarmé, in taking poetic language to the extreme limit where poetry almost merges with music, has been frequently commented on. His link with the visual arts—indirectly, through the Parnassians—has been less remarked. His long poem, "*Cleopatra*" appears to have been inspired by a picture by Frederick Sandys, a painter whom he admired.¹⁵ Two Swinburnian poems, "*Hermaphroditus*" and "*Fragoletta*", have complex sources, derived from different arts—the famous statue of Hermaphrodite, in the Louvre, Gautier's "*Contralto*", and a novel, "*Fragoletta*", by Henri de Latouche. How many Pre-Raphaelite and Parnassian poems have similar origins!

The ancient myth of Hermaphrodite—the son of Hermes and Aphrodite, of perfect beauty, but neither man nor woman, apparently fascinated many French writers of the "fin de siècle." This was the symbol of the unity of opposites, of harsh reality and sublime ideal, the tragic barrenness of more than mortal perfection. It is literally, "beauty for earth too rich, for use too dear." The thesis is embodied in Gautier's "*Contralto*".

A faire sa beauté maudite
Chaque sexe apporta son don
Tout homme dit, c'est Aphrodite,
Toute femme, c'est Cupidon.

(Each sex brought its gift to form that accursed beauty. Every man says, it is Aphrodite, every woman, It is Cupid.) The myth recurs in

many contemporary novels and romances—for instance, Gautier's "Mademoiselle de Maupin," Balzac's "Seraphita" Latouche's "Fragoletta", Mlle. Rachilde's "Monsieur Venus" where the heroine is both a man and a woman. Swinburne's poem on Gautier shows his mystified fascination with the "flowers double-blossomed", with the devotee of painful pleasure, who "sees not twice unveiled the veiled god's face." It was the symbol of his aesthetic theory, that "perfection, once attained on all sides, is a thing thenceforward barren of use or of fruit."¹⁶ Was this not too part of the "Art for Art's sake" gospel?

Swinburne's rapports with the greatest of the Parnassians, (if he can be ranked among them), Baudelaire, has been recently stressed by Valéry, the famous French poet and critic. Swinburne wrote a review of "Les Fleures du Mal", which the author apparently read and appreciated. He sent the young English poet a signed copy of his prose piece, "Richard Wagner et Tannhauser a Paris," with the inscription "A Mr. Algernon C. Swinburne, Bon Souvenir et mille remerciements, C. B." (Good remembrance and a thousand thanks.) The two do not seem to have met, for some reason, though Swinburne was then in Paris. Years later, in Swinburne's obituary on Baudelaire, there is a note of intimacy, personal sorrow. "The chances of things parted us once and again; the admiration of some years, at least in part expressed, brought him near to me by way of written or transmitted word; let it be an excuse for the insertion of this note, and for a desire, if so it must be, to repeat for once the immortal words which too often return upon our lips. *Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale*: "his elegy on Baudelaire, "Ave atque vale" stands in the line of "Lycidas", "Adonais", "Thrysis".

Baudelaire's pamphlet was about the theme of Wagner's opera, "Tannhauser", and Swinburne was writing his long poem, "Laus Veneris" on that subject, at the same time. It was the legend of a knight, who became the lover of Venus, and refused the Pope's pardon for his sin. Swinburne was not probably directly influenced by Baudelaire's work, for "Laus Veneris" was almost completed before he received it, but at least he found in that quarter a confirmation of his own ideas. "If any one desires to see, expressed in better words than I command, the conception of the medieval Venus which it was my aim to put into verse, let him turn to the magnificent passage in which Baudelaire describes the fallen goddess, grown diabolic among eyes that would not accept her as divine. For the Christian civilization, by declaring the flesh sinful, bringing in an idea of salvation and damnation not known to the antique world, had made possible the tempting anguish and bitter pleasure of sin. The old gods were not simply dethroned—

some of them stood for aspects of human nature which could not be denied—but consigned to the Christian hell. This was an old tradition, which the Renaissance and later the “humanists” took over from the Middle Ages. Marlowe’s Helen is not only an evocation of classical beauty but a succubus, a female demon, who literally sucks forth Faustus’s soul. Milton fills Satan’s legion with classical deities. Baudelaire declares that “the radiant, ancient Venus, Aphrodite, born of white foam, has not imprudently traversed the horrible darkness of the Middle Ages...to render homage to the Arch-demon, Prince of the Flesh and Lord of Sin...Tannhauser represents the eternal conflict between the two principles that have chosen the human heart as battle-field, that is to say, of the flesh with the spirit, of hell with heaven, of Satan with God.” Tannhauser is not a simple lover or pleasure-seeker. He “lives morganatically with the absolute ideals of voluptuousness, with.. the indestructible and irresistible Venus the terrible, chaotic immense love... raised to the level of a counter-religion, a Satanic religion.” Christianity has made man a sinner, by making him conscious of his sin. This was a dimension of human experience denied to the “pagans”.

“Counter-religion” implies belief in a religion, for one cannot oppose what does not exist. Mephistophiles is a fallen angel, whose domination means separation from God. That Baudelaire’s satanism was an inverted Christianity has now become an established literary convention. Such Catholic luminaries as Mauriac, Eliot, have claimed him as their erring, but authentic, brother. Some critics have claimed on the other hand, that whatever the state of Baudelaire’s soul, his poetry cannot be called Christian in any meaningful sense of the word. The debate does not concern us here, but rather what Swinburne thought of his confrere. Though the former was completely devoid of religious feelings—except, perhaps, hatred of religion—he understood and appreciated the latter’s peculiar, tragic “Christianity.” “It is remarkable that Baudelaire always kept in mind that Christianity, like other religions which have a broad principle of popular life in them, was not and could not be a creature of philanthropy or philotheism, but of church and creed, and this gives its peculiar savour and significance to the Christian infusion in some of his poems.” Swinburne, like many non-believers, preferred the hard and clear outlines of orthodoxy, indeed medieval Christianity, to the sentimental, meaningless pseudo-religions and substitute religions of his own time. In the case of the former, one at least knew what one was against.¹⁸ This appreciation appeared, it must be remembered, at a time when Baudelaire’s Christianity and “morality” had not become universally acknow-

ledged. Swinburne must be credited with insight for discovering a "vivid and distinct background of morality" in "*Les fleurs du mal*", when it was generally condemned, especially in England, as an obscene, insane book. Above all, he found the keynote of brooding "spiritual tragedy", which in Baudelaire's verses "dignifies and justifies at all points his treatment of the darkest and strangest subjects; the atmosphere of his (Baudelaire's) work to the atmosphere of Gautier's as the air of a gas-lit alcove is to the air of the far-flowering meadows that make April a natural Field of the Cloth of Gold...". Gautier's love of amoral pagan beauty does have an element of self-consciousness, and his hedonism is "delicately depraved" rather than spontaneous. Still, Swinburne aptly contrasts the former's hellenism with Baudelaire's introspective, self-tormenting faith. The "gas-lit alcove" suggests a stifled urban atmosphere, and Baudelaire has been called the first poet of a modern city. His *Inferno* is Paris.

The poetry of Baudelaire and Swinburne were frequently lumped together in crude, contemporary attacks on the "fleshly school of poetry". The English poet is said to have surpassed his master "in the representation of almost types of diseased lust and lustful disease". What is remarkable in both poets is not sensuality but the intellectual nature of sensuality. As the late Professor Amal Bhattacharya once remarked, Swinburne's white limbs are purely mental. These poets sing not of the joy of the flesh, but of its satiety. "Perversity is the fruit of weariness, as weariness is the fruit of pleasure. Charles Baudelaire has often set that theme to mystic music..." This remark of Swinburne is also applicable to much of his own poetry, to "*Dolores*", "*Faustine*", "*Laus Veneris*". In traditional medieval morality, the elevation of the soul is set against the temptations of the body. In Swinburne, as in Baudelaire, it is the mind, the consciousness, which corrupts the neutral body. One recalls the lines in Marvell's "*Dialogue of soul and body*", "As architects do square and hew/Green trees that in the forests grew". The "decadent" hero sins not so much because of pleasure, but through a deliberate choice of evil. "*Qui donc devant l'amour ose parler de l'enfer*", (Who then, dares to speak of hell before love). Love is chosen because it is the fruit of hell, a counter-value against the good. Medieval literature contrasts the transient beauty of the flesh with the corruption that must follow. In Baudelaire as in Swinburne, there is a fascination for diseased flesh itself. "*The Leper*", the story of which is taken from a French medieval chronicle, has some affinities with this aspect of Baudelaire's work in "*Une Charogne*" and the *Black Venus* cycle. One has only to compare these poems with "*The Leper*" by

Tennyson to see the obsession with and attraction for physical decay in the French poet and Swinburne.

Baudelaire's Lesbos poems illustrate the most extreme example of sterile passion, of aspirations beyond the human condition, doomed to fall into the abyss of fruitless, furious desire that leaves little space for satisfaction, of desire. Baudelaire's "femmes damnees" are not ordinary sinners, but "chercheuses l'infini" (seeker of the infinite) who yet fly from the infinite which they bear within themselves. ("Et fuyez l'infini que vous portez en vous"). These sad, superb, doomed, proud "femmes damnees" appear in Swinburne's "Sapphics" and "Anactoria". Swinburne defended the latter from charges of sadism (of which there are elements in Baudelaire too) calling it rather a study of a frustrated emotion, "that hardens to violence of rage or deepens to despair." In Swinburne, as in Baudelaire, love is an extraordinary pattern of torture and self-torture, domination and submission. "Beaute forte a genoux, devant a beaute frele". (Strong beauty kneeling before the frail beauty.)

Baudelaire and Swinburne were decadent poets, decadence being defined as "an intense self-consciousness, a restless curiosity in research, an over-subtilizing refinement upon refinement, a spiritual and moral perversity"¹⁹ But their great differences must not be overlooked. Baudelaire had spiritual depths and complexities unknown to Swinburne, aside from the obvious fact that the latter was a lesser poet.

If Baudelaire was Swinburne's spiritual brother, in agony, sin and (as he thought) in creation, Victor Hugo was his revered master. Their first contact is worth relating, both as an amusing story and as an example of Swinburne's aesthetics. Swinburne had been an admirer of Hugo since the age of sixteen, when he had read "Les Chatiments". However his first review of Hugo was critical, from the point of view of "Art for Art's sake", which had become itself a kind of moralism. He blamed "Les Miserables" for "too much moralising" and blandly asserted that he "would consider a fresh Hamlet or a new Ruy Blas cheaply purchased by the hanging without trial of a dozen innocent men." Even the ranking of his drama (which Swinburne, in fact, grossly overestimated) with Shakespeare would not have reconciled Hugo to such sentiments. But by a curious accident, he read the review in a translation, which attributed to it precisely the opposite meaning. He wrote to the young Englishman expressing his appreciation. "Je suis heureux que ce livre a appele l'attention d'un esprit tel que le votre, et que vous soyez, vous aussi, sollicite par les questions sociales, preoccupation supreme de notre siecle" (I am happy to have attracted the attention of intelligence such as yours, and that you also are moved by the social

questions, the supreme preoccupation of our century.) Swinburne was both amazed and overjoyed at this unexpected acknowledgement. As he wrote to a friend, "C'est sans doute un plaisir innocent, mais c'en est toutefois un assez grand, que d'avoir su plaire au maître qu'on a toujours vénéré." (It is doubtless an innocent pleasure, yet one great enough, to have been able to please the master whom one has always revered). His meeting with Hugo many years later, shortly before the latter's death, was equally bizarre. Among other things, Swinburne threw away the glass after toasting Hugo, in the old chivalrous fashion, to the 'master's' dismay. However there was no break in Swinburne's admiration. He addressed numerous poems, essays to Hugo, and wrote a book on him, after the latter's death. It was the man he admired, as well as the poet—the champion of noble causes, the conscience of a nation, an exile from the empire of the hated Napoleon III. The master's virtue seemed to cast a vicarious moral halo on the disciple. When attacked for the alleged vices of his personal life, Swinburne claimed the friendship of Mazzini, Hugo, Landor. Could the associate of such men be morally worthless?²⁰

But how, one might ask, did Swinburne reconcile his admiration for Hugo with his devotion to other, very different French poets, and with his belief in "Art for Art's sake?" How, above all, did he himself write so much of what today would be called "literature engage", literature of commitment? He not only wrote voluminous poetry about social, political, religious themes in general but about practically every important contemporary event. He chose as poetic subjects the rebels of Tsarist Russia, of the France of the Second Empire, of the Italian Risorgimento, as a poet of the thirties might have chosen Spain, and a poet today Vietnam. A large part of this poetry is merely occasional, some has lasting value, but that is another matter. Is he not contradicting his own precept, that art must not do good on other grounds, but be good on her own? The answer must be no. Swinburne did not abandon his precept, but enlarged it. Some critics have imagined him, oscillating between different guardian spirits, Gautier-Baudelaire on the one hand, Hugo-Mazzini on the other, "that like two angles do suggest (him) still." On the contrary, his aesthetic was wide enough to include both. Art, he asserted, "cannot be the handmaid" of any lord, philosophy, theology, moralism or politics, but it might be the "ally" of a chosen companion. No theme is obligatory for an artist, but neither is any excluded. "No form is obsolete, no subject out of date...If the spirit and breath of art but be breathed upon them indeed, then assuredly will the bones come together bone to his bone." The spirit of art, if she

could be truly evoked, would preside over modern barricades as over ancient bowers. "She is omnipresent and eternal, and forsakes neither Athens nor Jerusalem, Camelot nor Troy, Argonaut nor Crusader, to dwell as she does with equal good will among modern appliances in London and New York." Swinburne evidently did not believe in the theory, so common in his time, of a supposed "golden age" of literature and the automatic decline of poetry with mechanization. No one could deny Dante the name of a poet because he was engaged in a civil war, and placed princes and popes in his *Inferno*. It was in the line of Dante, Milton, Shelley, the great "prophet poets", that Swinburne placed Hugo, and no doubt he would have claimed a humbler place for his own poetry of a similar nature.

Swinburne analyses almost all aspects of Hugo's creative work. He finds Jacobean elements of violence and decay in some of Hugo's lyrics. Hugo's "Une rinte quand on entendit lemer sans le voir" (A night when one heard the sea without seeing it) influenced in imagery some Swinburnian poems such as "Hymn to Proserpine". Still his stress, above all, is on what he terms the Dantesque element in Hugo, the vision of terror and somber justice, in which the potentates of a rotten world appear in superhuman dimensions, before the bar of poetic imagination. It is political, indeed, but with politics made larger than life, carried into epic regions. "Hugo, and he alone, had the power and the right to call up the spirit of Dante, now thirty years ago, and bid it behold all the horrors of Europe in 1853; the Europe of Haynau and Radetzky, of Nicholas the First and Napoleon the last". This concept of literature Swinburne is ready to defend against all attackers, English and French. "Carlyle, the man of brass and Musset, the man of clay...have shown themselves at one in high-souled scorn for principles of mere rebellion such as Landor's and Milton's or for such belief in a new Brutus, as might disturb the dream of Augustus..." The reference is to Musset's verse drama, 'Le songe d'Auguste' (The dream of Augustus) which was, really or reputedly, a glorification of Napoleon III. Possibly, he also had in mind Musset's most famous play, "Lorenzaccio", whose hero is a tragic Brutus, a rebel who has lost his convictions, yet must follow these in action. The relatively low-pitched tone, the tragic yet unemphasised irony of Musset were apparently alien to Swinburne. Swinburne's own political poetry does not have the range, intensity and almost surrealist imagery of Hugo's "Les Chatiments." He strikes a note of shrill scolding, rather than grave denunciation, and the endless, high-pitched idealism in "Songs before Sunrise", "Songs of two Nations", tends towards monotony. He is at his best in sonnets such as

'On the Russian Persecution of the Jews,' which has an almost Miltonic power of compressed indignation, or in poems of individual rebellion against an oppressive social order, such as "A song in time of order". Gosse complained that Swinburne only wrote of revolutions in foreign lands, those that did not concern him directly. (He was always a staunch defender of the British Empire and violently opposed to the Irish rebels.) This sets him up apart from Hugo, with the latter's deep personal involvement and long exile, but has little relevance as regards his poetry. A rebel poet need not necessarily man the barricades. What is more important, Swinburne's political poetry lacks the complexity, the sense of tragic conflict that one finds, for instance, in Hugo's 'L' Année Terrible' (The terrible year). The reasons for this are clarified on reading Swinburne's studies of Hugo.

Swinburne, like Hugo, was a radical in the line of Shelley, Paine and the French Jacobins, republicans and democrats at a time when republicanism and "democracy" were still considered dangerously subversive. The struggle between feudalism and the rising modern industrial state was not over in many countries, and much of Europe lay under absolute monarchy. In "Les Chatiments", it is the princes and popes, the heads and tyrants of the old society, who are brought to trial, Swinburne enthusiastically applauded these judgements, just as he admired the Russian nihilists and "tyrannicides" of every sort, except the Irish Fenians. However another kind of conflict was rising in the relatively industrialized Western Europe, between the middle classes and the workers. This was symbolized dramatically by the Paris commune of 1871. The third French Republic, which Swinburne had celebrated in an ode, suppressed this revolt as ruthlessly as any emperor might have done. And here master and disciple diverged seriously. Hugo, in exile had opposed the Commune, but he pleaded for mercy towards the defeated communards, who were being decimated. Swinburne had always criticized Hugo's campaign for abolishing capital punishment. In the preface to a French translation of "The Cenci", he blames Shelley for declaring even the life of Francesco Cenci inviolable, as Hugo had asserted that the life of even Napoleon III should be spared. "Il y aura toujours, comme y en a toujours, des étra humains evers lesquels l'humanité n'a qu'un seul devoir : les supprimer, les exterminer, les anéantir..." (There will always be, as there always have been human beings towards whom humanity has but one duty : to suppress, exterminate, annihilate them...) Hugo's call for compassion towards the "ruffians and reptiles of the Commune" enraged him. In his long study of "L' Année Terrible", he even maintains that this attitude detracted from the literary

value of the poem ! Besides it was not simply a question of pardoning common criminals. Hugo was deeply, painfully divided on the subject of the Commune. He had condemned it, yet he could exclaim ; "O juges, vous jugez les crimes de l'aurore," (O judges, you judge the crimes of dawn) It was the dawn of something which Hugo, radical as he was in the old sense of the word, could not welcome. Nevertheless he sensed that this was a dawn, a turning point and not, as Flaubert and others vehemently asserted, a simple return to medieval barbarism. Swinburne, on the other hand, was wholly with Gautier, who compared the Communards with savage Red Indians and demanded exemplary punishment for them. Not that Swinburne was unaware of contemporary social realities. He blamed Hugo for not noting in his novel, "L'Homme Qui Rit" (The Man who Laughs) that England was no longer a "despotism tempered by epigrams" but a "plutocracy modified by accidents," He had no illusions about governments which were not old-style absolute monarchies ; Belgium had gathered "the final flower of ignominy" by expelling and almost lynching Hugo, for his plea for clemency. But he could not sympathize with the "new" revolutionaries, as he had supported the rebels against prince and pope. The rebellious workers had "sullied with the fumes of blood and fire the once sublime and stainless name of the commune." He did not ask who was the cause of the "blood and fire," At most, it was a struggle of equal evils, a "Dantesque vision (of fighting) between devils and lost souls in hell." Perhaps this explains partly the conservatism of Swinburne's old age. He had gone to the extreme limit of aristocratic radicalism, to draw back before the abyss of the Commune. He could not go further, like his friend William Morris, or even see further, as Hugo did.²¹

Perhaps the French *alter ego* of Swinburne appears most surprisingly not in his aesthetical or political aspects, but in his parodies. He wrote parodies in English as well, both of himself and others, but his French parodies are certainly superior. As seen earlier, he wrote reviews of two imaginary French Writers, Felicien Cossu and Ernest Clouet, and almost had these published in the "Spectator." The poems by "Cossu" sound like parodies of "Les Fleurs du Mal", especially of "Une Charogne" and the Lesbos cycle. "Clouet" comes out with deliciously novel facts of English life, as foreigners imagine it. These "extracts" are accompanied by commentaries, the English moralist severely reproving the French writer's immorality. It is a self-parody and also a parody of his critics, of his masters and his enemies "Charenton 1810" is a dialogue poem in Hugo's style, but with a theme that Hugo would have never touched. One of the characters, a young man, asks many questions, and his silent

companion, a mysterious old man, gives a reply which is a staggering climax. The manner is Hugo's but the old man in question is de Sade; a very different French writer, who also interested Swinburne.

Swinburne's real novels are not too successful, the fragments of "Love's Cross-Currents" have affinities with Laclos' "Les Liaisons dangereuses," but as Symons remarks, the former's "plausible and polite letter-writers" cannot be compared with the French novelist's "unravelling of the threads of life."²² On the other hand, Swinburne's French prose play, "La Soeur de la reine" and his novel, "La Fille du policeman". ("The sister of the Queen" and "The Daughter of the Policeman") are superb parodies. The former is largely a parody of Hugo's "Marie Tudor." It is a hilarious piece, about Queen Victoria, her love affair with Wordsworth and her unknown sister. "La Fille du Policeman" is the story of a Chartist revolt, with the prince consort, Albert, leading and betraying it as the "prince proletaire.". The style again is typically Hugolian: "Cela est incroyable. Cela est." (It is incredible. It is.) It is a parody of revolutionary literature by the writer of revolutionary idealism. These pieces in French place Swinburne in the front rank of literary satirists, and explain why the late Edmund Wilson, for example, preferred Swinburne's prose to his poetry, even if one does not agree with him.

It is not, perhaps, useful simply to catalogue different trends in French literature and their influence on Swinburne. The subtle interaction of the two cultures, the many forces that moulded Swinburne's aesthetic, his ideas, creation, must be taken into account. For influence comes only to the receptive mind and one seldom finds what one does not seek. There is little doubt that Swinburne found what he needed to enrich his own literary vision, from the luxurious ruins of Provence and the "gas-lit alcoves" of Paris.²⁸

DOCUMENTATION

1. T. E. Welby : The Pre-Raphaelite Movement
2. T. E. Welby : Op cit
3. Most of the Swinburne references here are from "Essays and Studies", "Studies in Prose and Poetry", "A study of Victor Hugo."
4. Swinburne would have been shocked to know that Baudelaire would one day be named with Saint-Beauve e.g. "From Saint-Beauve to Baudelaire" by Barlow.
5. Essays and Criticism Vol. 2 : M. Arnold.

6. Literary History of the Middle Ages : G. Saintsbury.
7. Cf. Love and the Western Man : Denis de Rougemont.
8. The Sacred Wood : T. S. Eliot.
9. New Writings : A. C. Swinburne
10. Theophile Gautier, his life and times : Joanna Richardson
11. Genres of Parnassian Poetry : Adam Schaffer
12. A Schaffer, op. cit.
13. Dramatis Personae : Arthur Symons
14. The poetry of France Vol. 3 : A.M. Boase
15. T. E. Welby, op. cit.
16. The Crown of Apollo
17. Baudelaire : Twentieth century Critical Views
18. This opinion is shared by many unbelievers, see for instance, Bertrand Russell's "Why I am not a Christian."
19. Arthur Symons, op. cit.
20. Swinburne : a critical biography : J. Overton.
21. There has been much dispute, recently, as to the real significance of the Commune. Certainly its contemporaries saw it as an epoch-making upheaval, to be praised or condemned as such.
22. His refusal to write for the "Commonweal", a paper edited by William Morris, could have no other explanation. See "William Morris, romantic to revolutionary" E.P. Thompson.
23. The "Influence" was not, of course, one-sided. The French Parnassians were influenced by Flemish, German, modern Greek and (through Poe) American poetry. One should rather speak of a general interpenetration of cultures.

THOMAS CAREW'S VISUAL 'CONCEITS'

SROBONA MUKHERJI

An important element of the 'imperious wit' Carew admired in Donne was his way of saying, as Dr. Johnson would say, what he 'hoped had never been said before.' This was not the turn that Carew's own wit was accustomed to take. As any reader of his poetry will find, Carew was quite content to refurbish old material and imitate tried techniques. His themes were drawn from the Latin poets, from the poetry of Marino and his school, from Donne and from many others both in England and abroad, while his style meets almost every demand of the laws of decorum. Bearing in mind the *Emblem*, the *Similitude* and other representational techniques set forth in books of rhetoric, it will be my attempt in this paper to demonstrate the predominant use of the visual conceit in Carew's poetry. A great many of Carew's images are related to the various arts of visual representation prevalent at the time. I use the word 'related' and shall try to point out the general nature of the influence exerted on Carew's imagination by the art of emblems and masques, taking heed of the warning of eminent scholars in this field against the uselessness of hunting for particular source books, considering how a single idea or image could be shared in common by any number of these.¹

Leishman finds an overwhelming element of 'sheer astonishment' in the poetry of Donne and a better balance between astonishment and illumination in that of Marvell.² Carew's pursuit of the marvellous appears much more restrained because of the nature of the poetic conceits he chooses to use. For though they were originally coined to arouse 'admiration', emblems, poetic or otherwise, drawn from the common stock, were fast losing their power to shock and delight, and Carew only rarely combines visual thinking with personal and abstract imagery in the way which gives freshness to Marvell's poetry. Instead, his conceits carry clear-cut intellectual meanings which were valid and intelligible to his readers.

One outcome of the studies on the art of the emblem and its effect on literature has been to teach the student of seventeenth-century poetry not to make a simple transition from the words to their prose sense by omitting such intermediate visual links as were certain to be present in

the mind's eye of the contemporary reader fed on emblem books. In the poem *To Ben Johnson* with its tersely packed imagery, Carew touches lightly on four occasions on ideas made familiar by emblem books :

Nor thinke it much (since all thy Eaglets may
Endure the Sunnie tryall) if we say
This hath the stronger wing, or that doth shine
Trickt up in fairer plumes ...

(11 11-14)

The image of the eaglets braving the sun⁸ appears again in another of Carew's poems, *To a Lady not yet enjoy'd by her husband*, providing in both cases a high standard for measuring achievement born of endeavour,

In the second instance, the unique immunity enjoyed by the laurel or bay-tree from destruction by lightning⁴ appears to be in danger of being shaken.

Why should the follies then of this dull age
Draw from thy Pen such an immodest rage
As seemes to blast thy (else-immortall) Bayes,

(11 23-5)

Implicit in this possible event is the idea that there is a 'sign or disorder in nature'⁵ and a warning that such disorder is removed by violent destruction by nature herself. The extraordinary conciseness of expression is achieved by presupposing the reader's acquaintance with the visual and moral, in short the emblematic, associations, and by combining these in the same image with the other association of the bay-tree—the poet's laureateship.

The last two visual conceits form part of Carew's final Admonition to Ben Johnson. In the first of these,

Let them the deare expence of oyle upbraid
Suckt by thy watchfull Lampe.....

(11 33-4)

the image of the lamp's oil wasting away in the cause of industrious labour⁶ is inseparable from the texture of the argument. Closely allied to it is the image of the 'Tapers thriftie waste'⁷ in :

Repine not at the Tapers thriftie waste,
That sleeke thy terser Poems...

(11 37-3)

where the same theme is varied and emphasized at the same time. The economy in both cases is again made possible by the visual and instantly recognizable property of the image used.

The imagery in *To her in absence A SHIP* could have had its source in either Catullus or Virgil⁸ but it had more recently been made a familiar idea by the emblem books.⁹ The fact that here, as in the other poem, *To my Mistris. AN EDDY*, Carew draws attention to the prevailing image by means of a sub-title heightens its importance. The dominant image, drawn out in extended metaphor, constitutes the poem entirely in both cases and can be said to epitomize Carew's emblematic achievement in lyric writing.

The manner as well as the thought-habit of the emblem is seen in the second of two poems, *Good counsell to a young Maid*, which, following Geoffrey Whitney's classification, would fall into the 'morall' category and in *Boldness in love* and *Tq my Mistris sitting by a Rivers side. AN EDDY*, belonging to the 'naturall' category. The most long drawn-out and most sustained of visual similes in Donne's poetry¹⁰ did not escape Carew's notice; he took it over for the last of the above-mentioned poems and built up an entire poem with an illustration and a moral. By and large, Carew's use of the poetic emblem upholds Whitney's point that of the three categories of emblems, 'Morall, pertaining to vertue and instruction in life.. is the chiefe of the three, and the other two maye bee in some sorte drawen into this head. For all do tend unto discipline, and morall precepts of living'.¹¹ It is the lesson one can draw from the poetic emblem that sets it apart from other modes of visual illustration.

As has been pointed out by Miss Freeman, the emblem has its place as a figure of rhetoric in books on eloquence:

...in Hoskins's *Directions for Speech and Style*, for example, it is classified as a kind of similitude. It was for him, one of the different means by which writing may be 'varied', an aid to literary success. Puttenham too classed it among literary devices.¹²

and Miss Freeman cites in a footnote part of Chapter XI (XII), *Of Proportion in figure*, where Puttenham writes *Of the deuice or embleme*. In this passage, however, Puttenham describes only those

...short, quicke and sententious propositions, such as be at these dayes all your devices of armes and other amorous inscriptions which courtiers use to giue and also to weare in liuerie for the honour of their ladies, and commonly containe but two or three words of wittie sentence or secrete conceit till they be/ unfolded or explained by some interpretatio.¹³

The fact that this passage occurs in *The Second Booke, of Proportion Poetical*, immediately following the discussion on the ocular representation of geometric figures in poetry, shows that here the writer is still

thinking of elements in poetry that are directly presented to the eye. The emblem not only consists in a part of a picture, it is expressly meant for display. There is a difference, not unbridgeable, between this kind of direct and outwardly represented visual form and the kind of visual thinking that is put to the service of metaphor, or to the tenor of a contrived style of which metaphor is a part, which explains and conceals, elaborates and compresses at the same time. The link between the two is provided in poetic practice by George Herbert in such poems as *Altar* and *Easter Wings* which Joseph H. Summers has called 'visual hieroglyphs', considering their pattern to be part of the serious instruments of meaning,¹⁴ and in theory by Puttenham in the following words :

...the words so aptly corresponding to the subtiltie of the figure, that aswel the eye is therwith recreated as the eare or the mind.¹⁵

But the visual conceit as a purely literary device which was Hoskins's concern is dealt with in Chapter XIX of *The Third Booke, Of Ornament*. It is here that the various possibilities of poetic ornament by resemblance are discussed, starting with *Similitude* which in the words of Hoskins 'is the ground of all emblems, allegories, fables and fictions',¹⁶ often interlocking one with the other.

As will be evident from considering the examples cited by Puttenham to illustrate *Omoiosis* or 'Resemblance', *Icon* or 'Resemblance by Pourtrait or Imagerie', *Parabola*—'Resemblance morall or misticall' and *Paradigma*—'Resemblance by example' in Chapter XIX, and the 'mixt allegorie' in Chapter XVIII, the distinction between the *genres* is a fine one. Hoskins's essay is short and synoptic but his classification is a broader and more rational one, and he seems to recognize better that even among the broader categories the differences are a matter of nuances.

Carew's imagery spans across from one category to the other. It seems useful and legitimate at this point to group his visual images into two main types : the decorative presentation of an idea or situation in pictorial terms which I shall simply call *similitude*, and those visual images which in addition to their decorative value are part of an argument, teaching a moral lesson or urging a form of action which I shall call the *emblematic conceit*. These might derive from examples current in emblem books which in turn incorporated material from fables and from the allegorical literature of older poets. In a few instances the images are of Carew's own making or have been inspired directly by figures used by other poets. Wherever possible I allude to an example of the similar treatment of a theme occurring in emblem books, not because this in itself proves Carew's image to be an emblematic one but

because it adds recognition to the fact that his use of a particular image was well set to arouse vivid responses.

The poem *To A. L.* offers a convenient instance of an entire poem being worked out on the basis of similitudes and emblematic conceits. An analysis will show the different uses to which Carew puts the techniques at his command.

Thinks not cause men flatt'ring say,
Y're fresh as Aprill, sweet as May,
Bright as is the morning starre,
That you are so,

(11 1-4)

Here the conventional similes, which Carew was not too proud to use elsewhere himself, make a good starting point for ironical attack. It is, however, later on in the poem, beginning just at the point where Carew starts translating from Marino's *Belleza caduca*, that visual images begin to abound. The first part of the argument culminates in an emblematic conceit, reversing the usual order of the emblem with much of the cautionary advice preceding the clinching example from nature's law.

These curious locks so aptly twind,
Whose every haire a soule doth bind,
Will change their abroun hue, and grow
White, and cold as winters snow.
That eye which now is *Cupids* nest
Will prove his grave, and all the rest
Will follow ; in the cheeke, chin, nose
Nor lilly shall be found nor rose.
And what will then become of all
Those, whom now you servants call ?
Like swallowes when your summers done,¹⁷
They'll flye and seeke some warmer Sun.

(11 37-51)

In the second, the middle part of the argument, all that is wanting is the appropriate picture accompanying the emblem :

...be provident

And thinke before the summers spent
Of following winter ; like the Ant
In plenty hoord for time of scant.¹⁸
Cull out amongst the multitude
Of lovers, that seeke to intrude
Into your favour, one that may
Love for an age, not for a day ;

(11 51-60.)

The two emblematic conceits, one following closely on the heels of the other, form the focal point of the poet's thesis. They summarize the two major premises of the logic of *carpe diem*, while the cluster of similitudes around each of them amplifies the theme. The last group of visual images, though pointing to natural phenomena, does not form an emblem but what Puttenham would call a dissimilitude :

The snake each yeare fresh skin resumes,
 And Eagles change their aged plumes ;
 The faded Rose each spring, receives
 A fresh red tincture on her leaves :
 But if your beauties once decay,
 You never know a second *May*.
 Oh, then be wise, and whilst your season
 Affords you dayes for sport, doe reason ;
 Spend not in vaine your lives short houre,
 But crop in time your beauties flower :
 Which will away, and doh together
 Both bud and fade, both blow and wither.

(11 73-84)

In spite of the fact that throughout these lines Carew has been translating freely from Marino and that a predilection for visual conceits is a dominantly Marinesque trait, the organization of the theme both in its couplet and argumentative forms owes its fineness to Carew's own application. He has played on a wide range of visual similes, metaphors and emblems, many of which were not derived from Marino's poem, to produce not merely a translation but an accomplished poem in its own right.

A comparison of the contexts in which Carew mentions the emblem would provide an indication of his concept of the form. *Vpon Ribband* concerns a token of love, an actual emblem in the practical sense, given to the poet by his mistress.

This silken wreath, which circles in mine arme,
 Is but an Emblem of that mystique charme,
 Wherewith the magique of your beauties binds
 My captive soule, and round about it winds
 Fetters of lasting love ; This hath entwined
 My flesh alone, That hath empalde my mind :

... ..

This holy relique may preserve my wrist,
 But my whole frame doth by That power subsist :

(11 1-6, 9-10)

In these lines Carew seems to have given us his most objective estimate

of the nature of the emblem. It is useful as a symbol, an outward index of the power exercised by that it represents over the inner recesses of one's being.

Throughout his poetry Carew retains this idea of the emblem, of the image, of the arts themselves as the outer manifestation of an inner truth; of the analogy between the emblematic form and the human body, between the poetic content and the immortal soul, an idea expressed by both his masters, Ben Jonson and Giambattista Marino. Therefore, even his highest praise of the emblem occurs in a context where it is valued for what it is worth and not more, a fact that is in need of stressing since Carew is proverbially known as a hyperbolic poet.

In the first of the two pastoral dialogues, a token, again an actual physical emblem, is exchanged between the shepherdess and her swain and is commended as

An emblème of eternall love.

The surpassing value of the emblem, in this instance a 'bracelet of bright hair,' is expressed in terms of its superiority over nature whose decay it arrests :

CL

... that haire

Shall it not change the hue,

Or leave the golden mountaine bare ?

CE Aye me ! It is too true.

CL

But this small wreath, shall ever stay

In its first native prime,

And smiling when the rest decay,

The triumphs sing of time.

CE

Then let me cut from thy faire grove,

One branch, and let that be

An emblème of eternall love,

For such is mine to thee.

(11 33-44)

The theme of the emblem as another Grecian Urn does not seem to appeal to Carew for the love token and its efficacy are forgotten in the very next line. In spite of the intrinsic merit of this particular emblem, it too, after all, stands for other things, such as the incorruptible grace of love and the immortalizing power of poetry :

CL

Thus are we both redeem'd from time,
 I by thy grace. CE And I
 Shall live in thy immortall rime,
 Vntill the Muses dye.

(11 45-8)

The most scathing criticism of the emblem, however, occurs in the poem *To my friend G.N. from Wrest*. This poem has been highly praised both as part of the classical tradition of country house poems and for its own intrinsic excellence.¹⁸ It seems that here, as in the *Elegie* on John Donne, Carew faced a moment of truth and found the heart to denounce the barren fulsomeness of some of his own practice :

Amalthea's Horne

Of plentie is not in Effigie worne
 Without the gate. but she within the dore
 Empties her free and unexhausted store.
 Nor, croun'd with wheaten wreathes, doth *Ceres* stand
 In stone, with a crook'd sickle in her hand ;
 Nor, on a Marble Tunne, his face besmear'd
 With grapes, is curl'd uncizard *Bacchus* rear'd.
 We offer not in Emblemes to the eyes,
 But to the taste those usefull Deities.

(11 57-65)

The allusions to the classical figures of Favonius, Vertumnus, Pomona and Flora, blend smoothly with the luscious description of pregnant earth and teeming bower. With the help of the more basic similitude Carew creates a picture of the wholesome luxuriance of nature,

Here steep'd In balmie dew, the pregnant Earth
 Sends from her teeming wombe a flowrie birth,
 And cherisht with the warme Suns quickning heate,
 Her porous bosome doth rich odours sweate ;

... ..

On this side young *Vertumnus* sltē, and courts
 His ruddie-cheek'd *Pomona*, *Zephyre* sports
 On th'other, with lov'd *Flora*, yeelding toere
 Sweetes for the smell, sweetes for the palate here.

(11 9-12, 93-6)

and contrasts it with the sterile turgidity of contrived art which he dismisses in the following words :

No Dorique, nor Corinthian Pillars grace
 With Imagery this structures naked face,

The Lord and Lady of this place delight
 Rather to be in act, then seeme in sight ;
 In stead of Statues to adorne their wall.
 They throng with living men, their merry Hall. (11 29-34)

One of the less known of Carew's poems, *Vpon my Lord Chiefe Justice*, is a masterpiece of the blending of wit with pictorial detail, forming a visual conceit remarkably appropriate to the occasion. Astraea, the goddess of justice, is invoked to aid what is at best a lefthanded compliment to the Chief Justice :

Hark how the sterne Law breathes
 Forth amorous sighs, and now prepares
 No fetters, but of silken wreathes,
 And braded hayres :
 His dreadfull Rods and Axes are exil'd
 Whilst he sits crown'd with Roses : Love hath fil'de
 His native roughnesse, Justice is growne milde.
 (11 8-14)

Sir John Finch's reputation as a corrupt and repressive Lord Chief Justice could not have been unknown to Carew.¹⁹ However, in the same year that he was made Lord Chief Justice, Sir John had been greatly involved in the production of a grand masque presented by the four Inns of Court, and Carew makes capital out of the fact. The description of the restoration of the golden age recalls Ben Jonson's masque *The Golden Age Restor'd* of which Sir John must have been aware and where, as in Carew's poem, Astraea returns graciously to the earth that she had once left in disgust.

...I had not more
 Desire to leave the earth before,
 Then I have now, to stay ;

 This, this, and onely such as this,
 The bright *Astraea's* region is,
 Where she would pray to live,²⁰

Carew's interest in the golden age is only incidental to his preoccupation with witty compliment, but his Astraea shares a similar conviction :

Astraea hath possest
 An earthly seate ..

 ...new-enthron'd she cries
 I know no Heaven but fayre *Wentworths* eyes.
 (11 22-3, 27-8)

Carew's own masque has been analysed by Brotanek and Reyher in their respective studies of the English masque, and more recently by Guifano Pellegrini who has worked out in detail the resemblances that almost all the figures in *Coelum Britannicum* bear to the allegorical figures in Ripa's *Iconologia*.²¹ Here Carew's business is with the fact that the 'whole sensible universe is a system of signs'.²² The following lines form one aspect of it :

Vice, that unbodied, in the Appetite
 Erects his Throne, hath yet, in bestiall shapes,
 Branded by nature, with the Character
 And distinct stampe of some peculiar Ill,
 Mounted the sky, and fix'd his Trophies there :

The universe, according to ancient opinion the Poetry of God, becomes in fact an anti-universe in Carew's third antimasque. As Momus says, 'there were some innocent, and some generous Constellations, that might have been reserved for Noble uses ..' but their effectiveness has been impaired 'since you have improvidently shuffled them altogether ..'

The same Peter Aretine that Momus glorifies in *Coelum Britannicum* is again mentioned honourably in *Rapture*. The sonnets of Aretine which accompanied sixteen engravings by Marcantonio Raimondi were well known in Carew's time. These references are surely not without significance in that they show Carew's ability to appreciate the poet's relationship with the graphic arts. The epigram which originally accompanied engravings, was favoured by Carew as it was by the other classical followers of Ben Jonson. Sometimes in these the effect is pictorial as in *Lips and Eyes*. Occasionally, as in *Vpon the Kings sickness*, it is akin to the statuesque, while in the *Epitaph on Lady S.* the carefully constructed patterns form part of an obviously intended mosaic ;

.. Shee was a Cabinet
 Where all the choysest stones of price were set ;
 Whose native colours, and purest lustre, lent
 Her eye, cheek, lip, a dazzling ornament :
 Whose rare and hidden vertues, did expresse
 Her inward beauties, and minds fairer dresse ;
 The constant Diamond, and wise Chrysolite,
 The devout saphyre, Emrauld apt to write
 Records of Memory, chearfull Agat, grave
 And serious Onyx, Tophaze, that doth save
 The braines calme temper, witty Amethyst.
 This precious Quarrie, or what else the list

On Aarons Ephod planted, had, shee wore :
One only Pearle was wanting to her store,
Which in her Saviours booke she found exprest,
To purchase that, she sold Death all the rest.

(11 5-20)

The allegorical mode of thinking during the seventeenth-century received from medieval and Renaissance ancestry, the presence of at least a vague awareness in the mind of every poet of the age of the literary potentialities of the emblematic art have been stressed by several scholars and now form the basis for further investigations into the practice of individual poets. The iconographic assembly of figures in the *Caelum Britannicum*, the significant treatment of the nature and use of the emblem in several poems discussed above, and the crystallization of the pervasive symbol of a poem in a motto-like sub-title as *A SHIP* or *AN EDDY* all go to show that the emblematic bias was a substantial force in the making of Carew's poetry.

N. B. All quotations of Carew's poems are taken from Rhodes Dunlap's edition of *The Poems of Thomas Carew*, Oxford 1949.

I have used A. Henkel and A. Schöne's invaluable compendium of emblems, *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVII Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart 1967, for citing references to examples of emblems. It is referred to as *Emblemata*.

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THE PROBLEM OF POINT OF VIEW IN *UNDER WESTERN EYES*

N. MUKERJI

On January 6, 1908 Joseph Conrad wrote to his friend Galsworthy that he was working on a novel entitled *Razumov* in which he was trying to capture the very soul of things Russian—*Cosas de Russia*. The letter also contained a brief outline of the plot of this novel. Four years later the book appeared under a changed and rather awkward title, *Under Western Eyes*. It was not merely the title which had changed; the story had also undergone tremendous changes in the process of writing. In the original plan as revealed in the letter to Galsworthy, Nathalie and Razumov get married and have a child who resembles his uncle Haldin. What is, however, more important about the change is a decisive shift from the hero to narrator. Conrad has provided the story with a narrative framework. For him, unlike James (who had his own reasons for using a limited point of view in his novels), the problem of point of view was not merely a question of method or form or technique; it was much more than that. It was a question of necessity, "temperamental necessity and compulsion,"¹ particularly when he was writing about Russian autocracy of which he as a child had been a victim. The use of an alien and critical point of view in this tale about Russia and its "senseless tyranny" is highly useful to Conrad in maintaining detachment and distance. In addition to giving an air of actuality and credibility to the story, the use of a narrator saves Conrad from the embarrassment of passion. The way he has extended the limited point of view of the narrator and has made it function as the omniscient point of view is an achievement of craftsmanship.

The story of *Under Western Eyes* is told from the point of view of the English teacher of languages (he has no name) who has lived for a long time in Geneva and has extensive connections with *La Petite Russie*. The narrator is both an observer and a participant (somewhat like Marlow, but how different!). "He is too objective and impersonal to have much in common with Marlow."² He embodies the Western point of view and enables Conrad to have a kind of double focus—the Russians as seen by themselves and as seen and understood (or mis-

understood) through Western eyes. "This is a Russian story for Western ears which...are not attuned to certain tones of cynicism and cruelty, of moral negation, and even of moral distress already silenced at our end of Europe."³ The teacher of languages reveals a critical attitude which is alien to the Russians of the story.

The nameless narrator, almost a non-entity, is a dull, cold and obtuse figure when compared to some other brilliant narrators of Conrad. He is prudent, restrained, self-complacent, and full of "proper indignation", but what is most significant about him is his limited capacity to understand the drama of remorse and passion, betrayal and redemption of which he is in parts, a silent spectator. He makes no secret of his obtuseness; in fact, his confession of obtuseness is repeated so often that it becomes almost a refrain. He begins the story by confessing, "I have no comprehension of the Russian character. The illogicality of their attitude, the arbitrariness of their conclusions, the frequency of the exceptional, should present no difficulty to a student of many grammars; but there must be something else in the way, some special human trait—one of those subtle differences that are beyond the ken of mere professors."⁴ And again, "I confess my very real sympathy had no standpoint. The Western readers for whom this story is written will understand what I mean."⁵ In his many "digressions" the same sentiment is repeated that it is very difficult for an outsider to understand the Russian mind and its complexities. "I suppose one must be a Russian to understand Russian simplicity, a terrible corroding simplicity in which mystic phrases clothe a naive and hopeless cynicism."⁶ The narrator uses the word "dense" in self-characterisation repeatedly. Particularly, he embodies the emotional imperceptiveness of the West. One significant instance of such imperceptiveness is found at the end of the novel when Razumov has just made a confession to Miss Haldin. She drops her veil, an act which symbolises that her illusions are destroyed. Razumov gazes at the veil spellbound, snatches it up, presses it to his face with both hands and escapes. The Englishman who has been witnessing the scene cries in the scared, deadened voice of an awful discovery, "the miserable wretch has carried off your veil!" The awful discovery is the discovery of the theft! He fails to understand the significance of the greater outrage. He says, "Something, extreme astonishment perhaps, dimmed my eyes, so that he seemed to vanish before he moved."⁷

Conrad makes effective and dramatic use of this denseness and obtuseness of the Western eyes to comprehend in full the Russian scene by heightening the contrast between the two viewpoints. The narra-

tor's obtuseness intensifies the horror, the nightmarish fear of the unseen, and the naked, stark loneliness that Razumov experiences. It also arouses our sympathy for his suffering. The narrator's obtuseness is more apparent than real. Some of the most important reflections on politics and history, reflections that his creator shares with him, are made in his digressions.

Uncomplimentary references to Geneva, the backdrop for this drama of remorse and passion heighten the imperceptiveness of the Western eyes. The city resembles the narrator in being cold, drab, dull and secure. Its decency and respectability contrast well with the cynicism and despair of the Russian revolutionaries. Geneva, "the passionless abode of democratic liberty" cannot understand the language of revolution. "The fate of its people was made secure from the cradle to the grave by the perfect mechanism of democratic institutions. They do not know the lawlessness of autocracy and revolution."

Conrad's success lies in dramatising the barrier between the East and the West in a meaningful way. The Russians of this story are over-emotional and the Westerners are frigid, cold, respectable and decent. The Western nations, Conrad believes, have made their bargain and paid the price. The Russia of *Under Western Eyes* seems to be under a curse. The very existence of its people is menaced by these extremes of passion; but through their suffering they come out to be more alive than the shallow and complacent Westerners. As a Pole, Conrad was peculiarly equipped to penetrate the minds of both the camps while dramatising the failure of each to comprehend the other.⁸

To the narrator of *Under Western Eyes* the tragedy of life is the tragedy of language. "Words are the great force of reality," he admits. The real meaning gets lost in the wilderness of words and they fail to communicate the intensity of experience. There is irony in his comments on the Russian attitude to words. He finds that Russians love words most and "so ardently do they speak and often so aptly that one can't defend oneself from the suspicion that they really understand what they say."⁹ The teacher of languages hears these voices, the voices of Russia, but his background incapacitates him from understanding the emotional significance of these words. The reader's insight is sharpened by the narrator's inadequacies.

The teacher of languages shares some of Conrad's ideas, particularly, his moral concern and his delight in irony, but he cannot be identified with him. He is distinct from his creator. He speaks for Conrad in his reflections on anarchy and his views on history;¹⁰ but he is not Conrad. He is only his mask, a very convenient one.

The use of a mask in the form of the narrator's point of view fulfils Conrad's compelling need for impersonality. The alien point of view lends distance and detachment to this tale of uneasy despotism, senselessness and suffering. It serves as a protective curtain that tends to separate Conrad from the action. At the same time, it also saves him from the embarrassment of passion. He wrote in the "Author's Note" to the novel in 1920 that his greatest anxiety in writing it had been "to strike and sustain the note of scrupulous impartiality." "I had never been called before to a greater effort of detachment: detachment from all passions, prejudices and even from personal memories...The obligation of absolute fairness was imposed on me historically and hereditarily by the peculiar experience of race and family." All his life Conrad remained very sensitive to the charge of bias against Russia for which he had both fascination and disgust. In fact, he never made any secret of his instinctive aversion to Russia. Of the many Russian writers, Conrad disliked Tolstoy because he was "too mystical" for him. His special hatred, however, was reserved for Dostoevsky who, incidentally, had influenced him the most. After reading *The Brothers Karamazov* in Mrs. Garnett's translation, he wrote to Garnett: "...It's an impossible lump of valuable material. It's terrifically bad and impressive and exasperating. Moreover, I don't know what D stands for or reveals, but I do know he is too Russian for me."¹¹ In October 1911, Garnett wrote to Conrad that his review of *Under Western Eyes* was appearing in *The Nation* and that it would refer to Conrad's bias against Russia. Conrad felt greatly hurt and wrote to "this Russian Ambassador to the Republic of Letters" back:

There's just about as much or as little hatred in this book as in the *Outcast of the Islands* for instance. Subjects lay about for anybody to pick up. I have picked up this one. And that's all there's to it. I don't expect you to believe me. You are so Russianised my dear, that you don't know the truth when you see it—unless it smells of cabbage-soup, when it at once secures your profoundest respect. I suppose one must make allowances for your position of Russian Ambassador to the Republic of Letters. Official pronouncements ought to be taken with a grain of salt...but it is hard to after lavishing a "wealth of tenderness" on Tekla and Sophia, to be charged with the rather low trick of putting one's hate into a novel. If you seriously think that I have done that, then my dear fellow, let me tell you that you don't know what the accent of hate is.¹²

The English teacher of languages is a disinterested observer and is

only marginally involved in the action of the novel. The limited point of view of the editor is extended so that it includes the eye-witness' report also. The result is a greater degree of verisimilitude. The narrator depends on Razumov's diary as well as his own memory. He functions, in parts, as the third-person omniscient observer and sometimes as the first person omniscient observer. The author has successfully managed the timeshift from the past to the fictional present and there is an air of ease about it. It is implied that he does not rush to his editorialising job the moment Natalia hands over the diary. Nearly two years elapse between Razumov's confession and his meeting with Sophia. We do not know about the time-gap between his getting the diary and his giving it the shape of a novel. This time-gap seems too highly useful to Conrad in maintaining distance and detachment, so essential to be the story.

The use of the narrator's point of view also contributes to the tone of irony in the novel. This irony, however, is different in quality from the verbal irony of *The Secret Agent*. Often, the narrator's explaining without understanding the real significant results in irony. One such striking instance is the scene when Razumov is making confession to Natalia. The poor narrator thinks that he is witnessing a happy lovers' meeting. The reader knows much more than him, because the narrator is supposed to know about the happenings of Part One afterwards from the diary, but the reader is already informed about Razumov's giving up Haldin and its consequences. The knowledge of his being a police spy is withheld from the reader till Part Four. The main aim in withholding the discovery is that Razumov should not lose our sympathy. It also results in much of the irony of the book.

Conrad's greatest achievement in using this particular point of view lies in his successful dramatisation of all the major scenes. We see things happening and we witness the drama as the scenes are recreated for us by the narrator. Particularly fascinating is the betrayal scene when Razumov is giving Haldin up, ignoring the moral bond, the man-to-man relationship, and it is imaginatively dramatised. Equally effective is the climax, the confession scene. The subtlety and economy of Conrad's art is admirable.

Conrad faces peculiar difficulties in managing the narrator's point of view. At times, it becomes clumsy, and a little wearisome. He finds it difficult to hide many such embarrassments. James who was a great admirer of Conrad's art and integrity would have been shocked by the technical flaws of the point of view. He would also have disapproved of the resultant looseness of the structure of the novel.

The English teacher of languages begins the book by disclaiming high gifts of imagination, expression and dramatisation. He establishes himself apologetically as a mere editor of Razumov's diary. He confesses his inability to comprehend the Russian character. In a way he is disarming critics and at the same time establishing the validity of his point of view. Calling himself a "silent spectator," "the mute witness of things Russian unrolling their Eastern logic under my Western", he raises the question of authority—"How did I come to know about Razumov and his tale?" He finds one easy way out of it in keeping the spirit of verisimilitude by saying that his is a mere editor's job and that his knowledge is derived from the contents of the diary.

In Part One the narrator interprets things and scenes as experienced and recorded by Razumov. He uses the nominal authority of the diary, but shifts over to a third-person omniscient point of view, thinly disguising the documentary evidence right on the third page of the novel. The same point of view is continued till page 86 with the ominous words of Councillor Mikulin, "Where to?" In Parts Two and Three he takes over even the nominal authority from the diary that participates marginally in the action. The tale is now told from the first-person point of view alternating with the third-person point of view. It is in these sections that Conrad experiences acute problems of point of view. Here we are not so removed from the action as the story is told mostly in the fictional present. Parts Two and Three are unnecessarily long and move very slowly. There is a deluge of dialogue and some of the scenes are very long. One misses the subtlety and economy of the earlier sections. The Chateau Borel section takes too long to develop. Perhaps, Conrad is justified in delaying the action. He has to prepare the reader for the confrontation scene. The apparent calm prepares us for the storm raging inside Razumov when he finds it impossible to live a double life of deceit and betrayal and realises that in giving Haldin up he had betrayed himself.

The source of the narrator's information is hardly important to the reader. As a matter of fact, one forgets that it ever existed, particularly, in the first hundred pages or so. By reminding us repeatedly that such and such a thing is recorded in the diary, the narrator destroys the illusion of life that the dramatised scenes create. It, nevertheless, reassures the reader that these things happened in distant times.

Sometimes, Conrad himself seems to forget that the source of the narrator's information is Razumov's diary. One such example is page 38 when the narrator discovers "Prince K—sitting sadly alone in his study," and "Prince K—was not a timid man." He is obviously exceed-

ing here the limits of his point of view, and assuming the role of the third-person omniscient point of view.

In Part Three of the book Conrad seems to be experiencing the most embarrassing moments in managing the double point of view. The whole thing is very clumsily done. The narrator jumps from Razumov's subjective point of view (what Razumov thinks at a particular moment) to his own first-person point of view of the eye-witness every now and then. This means that the narrator is both inside Razumov's mind ("Why has that middlesome old Englishman blundered against me? Razumov felt a faint chill run down his spine") as well as outside as the participant in the action at the same time. This shifting and shuttling back and forth does create awkwardness. One may ask, How does he know about Razumov's inmost thoughts when he is at the same time only an eye-witness?

In section III of Part Four the narrator walks into his own narrative. There is no diary for the climax scene; the narrator himself is an eye-witness of the drama. As a matter of fact, the scene is supposed to have taken place before Razumov's handing over of his diary to Natalia. The narrator does not report, but recreates the scene from memory. The dramatisation is excellently done. The narrator is a mute witness, utterly dazed.

The terrible irony of the situation lies in his inability to understand the emotional significance of the situation. "The reader's insight is intensified by the narrator's misconceptions or by the inadequacy of his judgement."¹³ The narrator thinks that he is witnessing a love scene. "To me, the silent spectator, they looked like two people becoming conscious of a spell which had been lying on them ever since they first set eyes on each other."¹⁴ A little later, "The true cause dawned upon me: he had discovered that he needed her—and she was moved by the same feeling. It was the second time that I saw them together, and I knew that next time they met I would not be there, either remembered or forgotten. I would have virtually ceased to exist for both these young people."¹⁵ He does not know that there is not going to be any next time in their lives. When the atrocious confession has been made by Razumov, the narrator comes out with his "proper Western indignation." "This is monstrous. What are you staring for? Don't let her catch sight of you again. Go away!..." "Don't you understand that your presence is intolerable—even to me? If there's any sense of shame in you..."¹⁶ Nowhere perhaps the words have failed so miserably as here. The unspoken has conveyed the deeper meaning. Natalia utters the most tragic lines of the book: "It is impossible to be more unhappy."

Conrad himself justifies in his Author's Note the use of the narrator. He observes that the narrator is useful to him "in the way of the comments" and for the part he plays in producing "the effect of actuality." The narrator also helps in understanding Natalia sympathetically by playing the role of a friend, a listener and a confidante. Without him she would have been "too lonely to be entirely credible." Conrad's narrator is different from the Jamesian "Central Observer," because he is meant to be different; he is created for a different role. Conrad, moreover, was very anxious "to strike and sustain the note of scrupulous impartiality." The narrator has served the author well in his complex design. Minor flaws of a technical nature do not and should not stand in our way of appreciating and admiring this great book. Many discerning readers such as Zabel and Gide have commented on the strenuous craftsmanship of the book. *Under Western Eyes* is, however, more than a triumph of mere craftsmanship; it is a great tragic novel. It is a vision of the Russian Colossus and a parable of our times. It is simply unforgettable, because it is human.

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HERBERT READ : HIS THEORY OF POETRY

[FINAL PHASE]*

SAURENDRA NATH BASU

(1)

Herbert Read's essay 'Definitions Towards a Modern Theory of Poetry' (*Art and Letters* : Vol, I, No : 3, Jan. 1918, pp. 73-78) records his earliest attempt—he was then twentyfive and was serving the Army as an Infantry Officer—to formulate a poetic and aesthetic creed of his own. There is in it an urge for a synthetic philosophy of life and art, and the philosophy has at any rate the sanction of his own life with the Western Front behind it. The sensitive, imaginative young man who was 'torn from' his 'mother soil' and was led by 'an unknown fate' felt 'the storm'¹ of the First World War about him. He was in desperate need of adapting himself to a world committed to atrocities and of rising above the prevailing sense of frustration, hopelessness and nothingness. But in the absence of any faith in traditional religion his mind sought to erect a defence around itself against the realities of life. He had found his intellectual and emotional shelter in an aesthetic attitude to life and come to hold on to the belief that art or poetry was the only salvation of life, and that aesthetic experience alone could give us the finest joys of life.

Read's theory of poetry in the Twenties was marked by his insistence upon a philosophic and scientific sanction for the absolute value of art and poetry, and from the beginning of the Thirties by the realization that poetry can be defined as 'form', and that only as 'form' it can be properly revealed. In the early Thirties Read arrived at a definite conclusion that the 'organic form' is the only natural and genuine principle of poetry. From the middle of the Thirties this aesthetic belief, directed to the realities of life, has shaped his creed that what is not organic is a contradiction of life itself. In the process he has come to hold that only the aesthetic approach to life makes life truly joyous and creative. Art is, he now declares, not so much a 'governing *principle* to be applied to life, as a governing *mechanism*.' Further, he asserts, 'without this mechanism, civilization loses its balance, and topples over into social and spiritual chaos.'² And in reaching such a bold conclusion he necessarily reorganizes his interpretation of the principles of aesthetic creation, and in this respect his principal source of reference is plastic and visual arts. Of the two principles of aesthetic creation—'beauty' and 'vitality'—vitality

appears to Read now as a more potent source of energy and a greater necessity as principle. He holds now that 'beauty' has never been an 'all-inclusive principle of art.' Beauty 'takes us out of life, to contemplate eternal values', whereas vitality 'puts us at the centre of life, to experience its essential quality, its source and power.'⁸ Naturally, he chooses vitality as a more important principle because vitality is essentially organic, hence, human :—

'.....there will always be a tendency to associate the organic with the vital and therefore with the human.' ⁴

In the late Thirties, Read argued that 'beauty' could be a genuine principle in artistic creation if it would come from the 'subtle and unconscious world of imagination'.⁵ But the more he entrenched himself in the belief that art is a governing mechanism of life, the more he tended to insist on the value of the energy contained in aesthetic activities. This fresh perspective places Read's concept of 'form'—'organic form'—on a modified philosophic and aesthetic basis. In the early Thirties he maintained that a genuine 'form' in art emerges from the vitality of the creative intention, fusing in one unity both structure and content. But under E. Cassirer's influence (*The Philosophy of Symbolic forms*, 1953) he was confirmed that art being unconscious in origin is at the same time symbolic in discourse, and the mind itself is the symbol making agent or entity. He tried to synthesise his findings from depth psychology with the philosophy of Symbolic Forms and made an effort to equate between the 'image' and the 'symbol'. The artistic activity he describes at this stage as a 'crystallization from the amorphous realm of feeling, of forms that are significant or symbolic.'⁶ In his early aesthetics the criterion of a 'form' was to signify and embody feeling and emotion. 'Form', for him now, is not only a mode of expression consistent with the psychic reality of the artist, but is also a constructive and organizing agent of human experience ; and thus 'form' represents a realization of the highest energies of life itself. Art thus acquires an essentially constructive power by virtue of its 'form' as a symbolic discourse.

Now we shall examine the final phase of Read's thoughts on poetry and enquire into the implications of these modified aesthetic elements in the progress of his theory of poetry. The basis of Read's poetics is that the formative principle which displays itself in nature does so in poetic creation too, and that anything which contradicts the organic nature of poetic form contradicts poetry itself. As a broad philosophic principle this accounts for 'form' as a self-existent entity continuous with the self-shaping, spontaneously emerging poetic essence. This view indeed affirms the poet's integrity, as Read understands it. But it seems

to fail to account adequately for the technical aspect of poetic creation. From the beginning Read has sought for a justification of the absoluteness of aesthetic cognition over discursive and rational cognition. In this search, from the beginning, he has perceived the technical aspect of poetry as an expression of distinctive psychological quality implied in the poet's vision. Thus he has developed certain fixities in his aesthetic approach at its very basis, and in whatever way he has tried to establish the absoluteness of poetic vision, either as 'image' or as 'dream' or a symbolic discourse, he has progressively entrenched himself in his fixities. Whether induced forms can be genuinely poetic in the act of creation, because they have survived as traditional media of expression is beside the point. Read has set a criterion for the poet's creative integrity in the 'form' which the poet's vision takes and has discerned 'form' as a 'perceptible symbol for a particular state of mind.'⁷ What one may sensibly argue is that a greater test of creative integrity and ability lies in expressing oneself adequately in a 'form' that has been accepted by others.⁸ Read indeed may reply that there cannot be any *adequate* 'form' for any expression : poetry *succeeds* as expression in the degree in which it emerges from the creative vision in the *only* 'form' in which the vision could embody itself. The criterion of integrity lies in the *success* of the expressive 'form'.

Even if we accept this aspect of Read's poetics unquestioningly, we cannot tend to ignore other signs of weakness in it. Read's interpretation of poetry, which consists primarily in discovering how poetry *happens*, not only leads us away from the 'poem' itself but also fails to offer any criterion for evaluation beyond a recognition of the poetic effect. The only objective test of the genuineness of poetic impulse and of the sincerity of the poet, for him, is the 'rhythm'. Following Coleridge, who said, 'as every passion has its proper pulse, so will it likewise have its characteristic modes of expression',⁹ he argues that in the act of composition the 'pulse records its characteristic beat' in 'rhythm.' And a genuine poetic impulse rejects fixed metrical patterns and replaces it by free rhythm : 'the beat in the rhythm is the pulse of the thought itself.'¹⁰

Now the fact is, from the beginning of his searches for an adequate theory of poetry, Read had regarded 'rhyme' as a mere decorative device outside poetic vision and hence rejected it as an inessential constituent of the poetic essence. The 'rhythm', he thought instead, is a more spontaneous measure of the poet's creative impulse. In 'Definitions Towards a Modern Theory of Poetry' (*Art and Letters*, Vol. I, No 3, 1918), his earliest formulation of a systematic aesthetic, he says ; 'Rhyme and metre

are arbitrary decorations', and that 'Rhythm is the modulated flow of stress within the phrase. The appropriate linking of rhythms within the poem makes the cadence of the poem.'¹¹ A few years later, in an essay, 'The Future of Poetry' (First published in *Times Literary Supplement*, Sept. 10, 1925, pp. 573-574; reprinted in *Reason and Romanticism*, 1926) he remarked that experimental research with Kymograph establishes that poetic rhythm has an instinctual and unconscious basis. He held that the element of regularity even in traditional verse and metrical patterns cannot be regarded as 'variations on the basis of a regular measure';¹² and that poetic rhythm cannot have any normal measurement of regularity, but has a ratio of duration, an element of proportion. And 'this is precisely what the best *vers libriste* poets, in France, England and America, have been contending for.'¹³ Poetic rhythm originates spontaneously and instinctively from sense perceptions and consists in the 'Idiom', the 'living organism of speech.'¹⁴ He explains :

'Now this organic unit, this idiom, is instinct with rhythm; it has irrefrangible intonation, and poetic rhythm is but the extension and the aggregation of these primary rhythms.'¹⁵

The success of regularly measured accented verse depends upon the use and accommodation of these idioms and free verse which 'includes the slightest as well as the widest divergence from regular pattern, is but the free use of these idioms.'¹⁶

As he advanced farther Read firmly fortified himself in his views that 'the more impassioned and poetic the verse becomes, the more irregular and "free" becomes the metre,'¹⁷ and that if poetry is 'sincere', it can have 'no essential alliance with regular schemes of any sort'¹⁸

In *The True Voice of Feeling* (1953) Read has studied poets from Coleridge to T. S. Eliot, and has tried to show how the pulse of the poets' emotional sincerity has been expressed in verbal symbols which embodied their mental states. And further, how those symbols as 'complete expressive units'¹⁹ have evaded any fixed form; and have taken significant forms expressive of unique revelations. Even when poets like Coleridge, Wordsworth and Keats have written in fixed forms they have given a kind of organic flexibility to them. This flexibility, Read argues, proceeds from the genuine naturalness of the poetic essence. In his bid to trace the continuity of Coleridge's organic principle to the modern times Read comes to T. E. Hulme, the poet and philosopher, who isolated the 'image' as the unit of poetic revelation and gave, as Read believes, a new direction to the

destiny of modern poetry. He traced the continuity of the organic principle from Coleridge to Hulme in Hulme's observation that 'The form of the poem is shaped by the intention.'²⁰ But Hulme's observation does not appear to go beyond implying that there is a natural and self-shaping completeness in every poem. Moreover, Coleridge has never, like Hulme, insisted on the 'imagistic' element in poetry, and he has never excluded the element of discourse or judgement from poetry.²¹ For Hulme, as Read understood him, the coherence of the poem does not emerge from a 'stream of discourse', but from a formed juxtaposition of plastic images which imply a discourse:

'Poetry is rather a crystallization of the discourse into symbolic images ... Thought begins with the simultaneous presentation to the mind of two distinct but related images.'²²

Thus—as Read's mode of argument seems to suggest—the element of thought, that is, the discursive element in poetic creation, is confined to 'the post-mortem on the event' and poetry just 'happens'²³ at the creative moment. But if this is so, how can we justify Read's phrase, 'the beat in the rhythm is the pulse of the thought itself'?²⁴ Rhythm is the pulse of the poet's thought, as he interprets Coleridge's idea; but 'thought' itself he explains in terms of a non-temporal 'crystallization'. We fail to grasp how such 'thought' can have a 'pulse' and such 'crystallization' a 'beat'. But Read pursues his ideas to the extreme. To him poetry is a verbal symbol and the function of the poet is 'a like function that creates a unity of melody and harmony of music',²⁵ or 'a compositional unity in painting or sculpture'.²⁶ Rhythms of poetry, however, 'are sensuous (aesthetic), and determined by internal necessity, by the need to find some vocal correlative for a state of consciousness'.²⁷ Music is different from poetry in the nature of its formal organization. But Read argues that all arts have the same aesthetic laws and of all the arts music most clearly shows 'how an art that is based on sensational elements, acoustical vibrations, can have a meaning that is not in the nature of the medium, but revealed through the medium'.²⁸ The value of poetry as that of any other art is in the 'superrational powers of cognition',²⁹ which however does not mean a denial of life or an escapism but a transportation into an order 'higher than the unreasoning existence of nature'.³⁰

This is indeed Read's highest justification of the poetic absolute and an insistent seeking of this justification has transformed poetry from a reality of its own to a superreal entity.

(2)

We are to consider now some other implications of Read's theory of poetry.

How does the poet's individuality, with all his intuitions, instincts and sensibility, play a role in the building of the poetic world which has 'its own truth and its own law'?

Read's theory of poetry has progressively transformed poetry into a symbolic form of discourse. The 'form' has the power to present the feeling that poetry tends to convey, and Read says 'by virtue of the form we apprehend or conceive the nature of the feeling'.⁸¹ But how do we discover the 'form'? The 'form' sometimes may be patterned from within the poet's or artist's psyche, in which cases it is simply 'symbolic of human feeling'. But, Read says, 'more often the artist is *possessed* by intuitions, promptings of the unconscious' which have no basis in his perception, sensation or feeling. Read's tentative explanation in this regard is that the 'form is not imposed from without, nor dictated from within'; but it is a synthesis of a 'dialectical development', a synthesis which makes art or poetry a 'unique event, a new reality'.⁸²

But how to explain the nature of this dialectics? Read believes that at a 'significant moment',⁸³ which is the 'image', the poetic consciousness receives the truth 'revealed by the Muse'⁸⁴—an impersonal and mysterious energy which gives to the creative imagination of the poet its shaping power. That is to say, poetry is a thing that *happens* to come as an 'autonomous verbal activity', which activity 'succeeds in presenting to the mind a self which the poet afterwards gratefully accepts as his own'.⁸⁵

By making the poet a receiver of a high truth, which is inaccessible to rational or discursive reasoning, Read has tried to justify the supreme value of poetic cognition, but has, in effect, converted the poet into a receiving agent, an automaton so to say. The only freedom that the poet is left with is his power of making the formal elaboration of the essential vision or revelation that is *given* to him, or of which he alone is the receiver. In his earlier poetics Read was in search of the condition congenial to genuine poetic creation. This condition, he thought, is the freedom of the poet's consciousness—freedom from the incursions of the 'super-ego' and 'ego'. But he has modified his vocabulary to accommodate the needs of his later theory of poetry. Besides excluding 'all judgments and prejudices proceeding from the ego', the poet, he thinks now, must allow his sensibility 'to be guided'⁸⁶ by the shaping power of the Muse. The true poet, he suggests, is one 'who is a stranger to the self he meets in his poetry'.⁸⁷

Though there is an essential identity between Read's earlier concept of 'personality' (*Form in Modern Poetry* : 1932) and this new concept of the poet's 'self', (for his whole poetic theory rests on a belief in the existence of the self,³⁸) yet the modification that his poetics has undergone is not insignificant. At the moments of creative activity, he held in his early enquiries, the poet 'stands face to face with his personality.'³⁹ By this he meant that the poet becomes aware of his own 'self' and at the same time experiences arise from the 'realm of existence to the realm of essence.'⁴⁰ In this modified version of his poetic theory, Read speaks again of the poet's awareness of his own 'self' when he is engaged in poetic creation. But because the essential vision is *given* to the poet, what the poet becomes aware of, he observes now, is not the 'self' which he *is* but whom he may afterwards 'gratefully accept as his own'. 'A good poet', he remarks, 'is a stranger, to the self he meets in his poetry.'⁴¹

We are 'to examine more elaborately some other peculiarities of Read's thoughts on poetry. In whatever way Read has endeavoured to establish the supreme value of poetic cognition, his aesthetic belief leaves no room for an analytic and discursive evaluation of the poem *as poem*. For him, the total happening of the poem—vision and embodiment—has nothing of deliberate and conscious planning in it. His theory of poetry does not dismiss technique, but merges it with the forming process as a psychological fact; and thus it negates at its basis any rational mode of critical analysis. Solomon Fishman points out that this denial of 'the rational basis of criticism', or a relegation of it 'to a secondary position' dissolves criticism 'by merging it with the poem.'⁴²

If Read's theory of poetry leads us away from any evaluation of the 'poem' as a verbal art, it is because from the beginning his interest has centered on the justification of the supreme value of poetic cognition which, he firmly believes, is beyond rational appraisal and analysis. He has seized Hulme's concept of the non-discursive 'image' as the unit of poetic revelation from the beginning of his aesthetic investigation and has progressively endeavoured to justify that the isolated 'image' is the only poetic entity, calling to his witness the authorities of Croce, Bergson, Whitehead, Vico, Leone Vivante, E. Cassirer and many others. He has insisted on Hulme's idea: 'In a sense poetry writes itself',⁴³ and: '*Creative* effort means *new* images...';⁴⁴ but he has excluded any element of *effort* from poetic creation and has finally made the poet a receiver of the truth 'revealed by the Muse'.⁴⁵ From the beginning he has made his own interpretation of Hulme's 'Imagism',

and has grasped the non-discursive 'image' as an object of vision without leaving room for 'creative effort.'⁴⁶ The effect of this interpretation has been far-reaching. By trying to free essential poetic entity from all discursive and rational elements he has converted poetry into an uncorruptible ideal entity which, as he himself is aware of, is practically non-existent.⁴⁷ The fact is, this ideal of uncorruptible poetic entity is a part of a greater ideal which Read believes in. He thinks that the sensibility of man has decayed and atrophied in the modern technological civilization. This decayed and atrophied sensibility has to be renewed and revitalized. Aesthetic sensibility, by its uncorrupted purity and freedom from rational and functional bias, he hopes, can alone restore an innocence of vision and consciousness. Poetry acquires a significance once it originates from an uncorrupted consciousness. And then alone it can establish the knowledge of the reality 'of the beauty that is truth' and 'the truth that is beauty.'⁴⁸

This, in another sense, is Read's ideal of a reanimation of romanticism, a historical moment which, so it seemed to Read, had started the process of revitalization of our aesthetic consciousness by fusing in one vital unity vision and expression, sensibility and thought, image and utterance. The romantic poets, he argues, realized that the poetic act is not 'an intellectual effort.' So they tried to effect an 'immediate communication of their vision' thereby performing a 'priestlike task.'⁴⁹

For Read, the inveterate romantic, the poet is both a seer and a law-giver and he plays his social role, his destiny, as a seer and law-giver by revitalizing our uncorrupted consciousness. And the only effective way of 'evading the corroding action of consciousness'⁵⁰ in our age, Read believes, is the creation of new symbols of love, hope and original beauty. These symbols of reconciliation by being 'forged in the unconscious depths of the poet's psyche', domesticate our self-annihilating instincts and capably combat the instincts of violence and brutality because by their very nature these symbols 'transcend and measure the dominion of force.'⁵¹ The paradox of the issue is that the poet has been made a receiver of truths over which he has no personal control, yet he has been thought to be capable of creating those poetic symbols that have profound moral and social value. For Read, however, this is no paradox. He believes that the symbolic discourse of poetic reality is a superreality emerging spontaneously from the depth of the poet's psyche as vision or truth. This vision or truth is given to the poet by the Muse, the archetypal and impersonal shaping power which is the source of the formative energy of life itself. In the late Thirties Read held that poets were the individuals

who alone could protest against the tyranny and barbarity of the present civilization and bring about a revolution most effectively by remaining true to their essential function *as poets*, and by their devotion to the whole of humanity.⁵²

His theory of poetry at that period was shaped in its very nature by an Ideality. The attribution of a greater social role to the poet, and that too on the strength of the poet's uncorrupted consciousness, is the culmination of the same ideality. Indeed, this is the natural culmination of a theory of poetry which was born of an essentially aesthetic attitude to life and nourished from the beginning on the thoughts that art is the 'redemption of Life', 'Only through Aesthetic emotions can we experience that which is exquisite in Life',⁵³ and that art unites us with 'the whole cosmic process.'⁵⁴

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1. *The End of a War*.
2. *Education Through Art* (First published in 1943) :
Education Through Art (London, 1958) p. 14.
3. 'A Seismographic Art' : *The Tenth Muse* (New York, 1958) p. 303.
4. *Henry Moore* (Percy Lund, Humphries, London, 1957) p. XIV.
5. *Poetry and Anarchism* (1938) reprinted in *Anarchy and Order* (London, 1954) *Anarchy and Order*, p. 108.
6. *Icon and Idea* (London, 1955) p. 18.
7. *The True Voice of Feeling* : (London, 1954) p. 151.
8. G. S. Fraser points out that Read 'ignores the fact that iambic pentameter couplets come "naturally" to a poet like Roy Campbell and that the free verse of Pound has, just as obviously, been "worked on".....and the poets of the greatest romantic period, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats, expressed themselves "spontaneously" in sometimes very elaborate forms.'
9. G. S. Fraser : *The Modern Writer and His World* (Rupa & Co., Cal, 1961) p. 288.
9. Quoted by Read in *The True Voice of Feeling* (London, 1954) p. 24.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Art and Letters*, Vol. I, No. 3 (1918) p. 77.
12. *Reason and Romanticism* (London 1926) p. 79.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Phases of English Poetry* (First published in 1928) London, 1948 ; p. 138.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
19. *The True Voice of Feeling* (London, 1954) p. 152.
20. Quoted by Read, *Ibid.*, p. 111.
21. In his essay 'Shakespeare's Judgement equal to his Genius', Coleridge maintains that 'the judgement of Shakespeare is commensurate with his genius—nay, that

his genius reveals itself in his judgement, as in its most exalted form'. (S.T. Coleridge: *Lectures on Shakespeare ETC.* Everyman book, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. London, 1951 p. 44)

Coleridge indeed does not separate Shakespeare's genius from his faculty of Judgement but discerns it as an element of his genius,

22. *The True Voice of Feeling*, p. 115.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *The Forms of Things Unknown*, (London, 1960) p. 113.
28. 'Originality': *The Origins of Form in Art* : (London, 1965) p. 30.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
31. 'Susanne Langer': *The Tenth Muse* (Horizon Press, New York, 1958) p. 247
32. *Ibid.*, p. 250.
33. 'The Poet and His Muse': *The Origins of Form in Art* (London, 1965) p. 138.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
38. *Form in Modern Poetry* (London, 1948) p. 30.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
41. 'The Poet and his Muse' *The Origins of Form in Art* (London, 1965) p. 132.
42. S. Fishman: 'Sir Herbert Read: 'Poetics Vs. Criticism' *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. XIII, No. 2 (Dec., 1954) p. 161.
43. Quoted by Read in *The True Voice of Feeling* (London, 1954) p. 110.
44. Quoted by Read *Ibid* , p. 111.
45. 'The Poet and his Muse': *The Origins of Form in Art*, p. 145.
46. *The True Voice of Feeling*, p. 111 Italics mine.
47. See *Collected Essays* (London, p. 110).
48. *The Forms of Things unknown* (London, 1960) p. 31.
49. 'The image in Modern English Poetry' *The Tenth Muse* (Horizon Press, New York, 1958) p. 136.
50. *The Forms of Things unknown* : p. 205.
51. *Ibid* , p. 205.
52. See Introduction to *Surrealism*, (1936) *Selected Writings* (London, 1963) p. 255. *Poetry and Anarchism* (1938) ; *Anarchy and Order* (London, 1954) p. 74.
53. (Recorded in the 'War Diary' on 15.VIII.16) *The Contrary Experience* (London, 1963) p. 76.
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JOYCE CARY'S AFRICAN NOVELS : VISION OF AN ARTIST

BIMALENDU MAJUMDAR

The popularity which Joyce Cary's African novels enjoyed at the time of his death in 1957 is the most reassuring thing in the history of contemporary literature. There is not in these novels any exploration of the colonial scene which might have a value of its own, nor do they reflect the central tensions concerning the civilization of our time. There are not many conflict of events in the novels, and for ordinary readers, not many breath-taking excitements and consequently little drama. One can find in them a conscious tendency to avoid depiction of thinking characters, and the intention in Cary's African novels is, not infrequently, weakened by a lack of analysis. Yet, after many years of patient practice, his joyful presentation of life gained him not only the approbation of cautious critics but the homage of multitude of readers in the fifties and sixties.

In his early novels Joyce Cary drew on his experiences as an administrator in Nigeria. His range of experience in them is manifold and massive on *Aissa Saved* (1932), for example, he begins recounting the incidents of Shibi Rest Camp built on the Niger by the assistant resident Bradgate round about 1912. (pp 7-8). He relates the role of the missionaries and the officials ; tells how Kolu town, on the waterside, was inhabited by tribes like Hausas, Nupes and Yorusas (p 20) ; the suffering of people following the drought and bad prices of 1921 after the war years (p 24) ; and the conflict of culture and belief among the Christians, the Mohammedans and the natives or sometimes among the Christians themselves (pp 24, 26, 33, 50-53, 55 etc.). Similarly, *The African Witch* (1936), a more important novel, may be read as a story about the nascent growth of nationalism on the question of teaching English language (p 26), the condition of ignorance, superstition and near darkness, and the excellent work done by the missionaries and the members of the British Political Service (here by imaginary characters like Bradgate, Rudbeck, Sangster etc.) for the spread of education enlightenment and culture among the natives (pp 62, 66, 143, 306) *Mister Johnson* (1939) depicts with vividness and immediacy a landscape of river, forest and bush (pp 13-15) ; paints the picture

of Fada Railway Station and town, of forts, barracks and offices (pp 17-19), of markets, prisons and courts (pp 85, 110, 232-33, 234-37). Cary never tires of giving us narrative account of conditions of poor health and insanitation, rubbish heaps, filth and unclean offices (pp 29, 51, 83, 111 etc).

Joyce Cary, then, is one of the few novelists to emerge since the war who really responded to the wider movements of contemporary history¹. However, he is not a chronicler of contemporary events, and as the novels will show, not even an interpreter of primitive psychology. He does not figure as a brilliant sociologist either. In estimating his African novels the depth of his feeling is of greater importance than the range of his experience. He retired from Nigerian Political Service in 1920 and his first African novel came out of the press in 1932. After the lapse of well over a decade he recollects the raw experiences of his sojourn in tranquillity and the novels become for him lyrical statements of deeper truth about life. Alone among the African novels *The Castle Corner* (1938) is an exception. Here he did not draw his experiences of life abroad for the purpose of the theme of a novel.

The novels abound in recurrent references to English life, institutions and ideals. An instance in point is *Aissa Saved*. The women in the novel beat the floor and sing praising the white god.

‘The god is angry with Oke.
He gets us yam no sheep
The white god is stronger than Oke,
He has stopped up her rain.’ (p 120)

Again, Aissa speaks to Huin in English because she knows that it is God’s language (p 180). Louis Aladai, a native in *The African Witch* was educated at Oxford; and when Mr Judy Coote visited his rooms, she finds pictures in large gilt frames of the King and Queen, King Edward and Queen Victoria in Buckingham Palace (p 105). But by far the most typical ideal of English character is that of Mister Johnson. His wife Bami has fled away and the Wazirri suggests the use of force, or even a little beating in order to restore her to him and bring her to book. But he protests, ‘No, no, in England, Wazirri, we do not beat our wives. That is a savage, low custom’ (p 73). By way of hints, suggestions and direct references the Cary characters very often talk of English institutions and ideals of government. His stories have their origin in the experiences gathered in Southern Nigeria, Western Sudan and Cameroons. They reflect the tradition, belief and condition of race relations obtaining in these places, but the characters, lose no opportunity in flying to the shores of England on the wings

of imagination in order to secure a more satisfying pattern of life and living. The right reading of his African novels, written early in his career, leaves an impression of mixed feeling of devotion to English ideal and attachment to African life.

The arguments in support of the African novels of Joyce Cary being the works of imagination will be further reinforced by an impartial examination of source materials. In the prefatory essay to *The African Witch* Cary wrote, "This book began in a sketch, made sometimes in the middle twenties, of an African novelist. I called him the Black Prince, and he was, as far as I can remember, a much more violent and hysterical man than Aladai. "An intense love for the country grows in Louis Aladai only in the closing stages of his life. Talking to Judy Coote he remarks, "But we can be a nation with a soul, with freedom" (p 270). Early in life he had been to Oxford for two years and came back home without taking a degree. At that time, as his conversation with Mrs. Vowls reveals he disclaimed any superiority to the English (p 71). The development of Louis Aladai's character contributes to our knowledge about the growth and gradual development of nationalism in Africa. But we remember him chiefly among other things, for the sympathy he works in the mind of Judy Coote responding to shades of meaning and feeling for his real capacity for friendship (p 20), or for the respect, gratitude and admiring affection he felt for her (p 38). He remains loveable for heightening our consciousness as human beings and pleasurable for communicating to us a unique kind of knowledge usually found in imaginative literature. The source material of *Mister Johnson* is even more sketchy. "Mr. Johnson is a young clerk who turns his life into a romance ..I have been asked if he is from life. None of my characters is from life but all of them are derived from some intuition of a person, often somebody I do not know, a man seen in a bus, a woman in a railway platform gathering her family in a train', wrote Cary in the preface to this novel (3). During the war years he censored the letters of some unknown African clerk. He remembered him. Another clerk was sent to him in remote Borgu who once spent all night copying a letter for him. He remembered both of them. Out of the faint memory of this clerk he created the irresponsible and child-like figure of Mister Johnson. Mister Johnson twists and turns his way across the foreground of the novel and before long he is a happy husband, triumphant lover and a comforter to his wife (p 45). Irene is not Ada, Jude Fawley is not Thomas Hardy, and David Copperfield is not also Charles Dickens. Despite factual parallels these characters in Galsworthy, Hardy or Dickens illustrate the principle of

esemplastic imagination. Louls Aladai, likewise, is not the African novelist whom he remembered and Mister Johnson is not the clerk who was sent to him in Borgu. The Cary characters, cited as examples, are not important in the rudiments of their origin. They are significant for the presentation of aspects of life which confirm and enlarge knowledge of them as examples in typically trying situations.

In the discussion about the African novels we reach a point where what is written about African life becomes less important than how it is written. It is a vision of life in terms of song, dance and drink, an expression of the boisterous (because turbulent and noisy scenes are common in Cary's scheme of life) gaiety. Aissa is detected while protesting love to Gajare, her husband, and showing signs of softness to her son, Abba. She tries to make amends, looks through a large window hole above the altar and sings to Jesus :

‘Oh what happiness to live for you,
Oh what joy to die for you,
Oh what joy of joys, to see your face
For ever and for ever.’ (p 148)

The women's war, an episode forged in the crucible of his imagination, holds an important place in the scheme of *The African Witch*. On the second day of the war the women are surprised by the case of their triumphs and begin singing —

‘The big judge Is come to a little boy,
He said to the women, let me by,
They said to him, making play,
Out of a woman and into a woman’ (p 240).

Mister Johnson knows for certain that he will die. He becomes noble in his pathetic inevitability. Songs come unbidden to him—

‘Good-bye, my little father, my little mother
I'm going for the white man's war.’ (p 243)

Again, he bids farewell to his wife—

‘Good-bye, my night, my lil wife-night,
Hold me in arms ten thousand time.’

Many other instances may be quoted. Cary paints a bright and gay world. Twentieth century literature has concentrated so much on anguish, however, that it has omitted the possibility of joy. Hence the need for a new vision.⁸

It is a free world. The characters are free to accept or reject, and what is more significant, free to create. The white rulers want to create conditions for the grant of freedom. ‘This bloody country,’ said Dick (an official belonging to the ruling class), ‘is going rotten with sentimen-

talism. 'I'm just sick of it...' (p 196). At another time Louis Aladai has come back from Oxford. He may be regarded as a vehicle through whom the idea of freedom finds expression. Cary records in an omniscient point of view, 'They did not know what he meant by freedom, 'and as for justice they supposed that some one had misunderstood and repeated nonsense' (p 105). But by far the most successful embodiment of the ideal of freedom is Mister Johnson. Sergeant Gollup in this novel is an old soldier. He has gone over to Africa. While talking to Johnson he once comments, 'I tink some day we English people make freedom for all de worl'—make them motor roads, make them good schools for all people...' (p144). In *An American Visitor* (1933), another African novel of Joyce Cary, the theme "is the captivity of anarchism compared with the freedom of good government." (4).

Imaginative literature shows signs of symbols. A break-up of the story-line in his different novels will show that places like Shibi Rest Camp in *Aissa Saved* (p 7) : Rimi (one of the ports on the Niger) in *The African Witch* (p 26) and Fada district in *Mister Johnson* (p 93) demands our attention fairly increasingly. These places suggest to us many things more than what we can possibly learn by the mere mention of their names. The places are associated with fond memory of acts of creation. Or, sometimes the creative urge of the officials and the natives finds expression in the form of construction of a bridge or a road, and such acts of construction introduce Africa to the modern world. The natives are afraid that the evils will enter into their life following a successful work of construction. The Akoko bridge, a symbol of modern Africa, was nearing completion. A voice was heard. 'Allah who wants a bridge. It will only bring a lot of cursed Yoruba traders,' (p 70. *Aissa Saved*). In the same way, we see how the District Officer Rudbeck in *Mister Johnson* conceives the idea of building the Fada North Road. He dreams of it, and feels an excitement and emotion unusually intense in his experience of it. He is like thousands of English men who every year get the idea to make a garden or build a summer-house and translate the idea into reality (pp 92, 114-116—*Mister Johnson*). The road itself seems to speak to him. It seems to abolish old ways and bring wealth and opportunity for good and vice. Fada road is finished and it seems to Rudbeck that life holds nothing more for him. (pp 183-84, 186). Aspiration seems greater to Rudbeck than achievement in the sense Browning uses the concept in his poems. The narrative of the Akoko bridge, Fada North Road, Shibi Rest Camp, and of Rimi read almost like prose poems. They are poetic artefacts which give us new in sight into the nature of the whole; and if we piece together the illumi-

nating symbol of women's war in *The African Witch* with the ones already mentioned we will, most likely, be able to discover more in the novels than what we can learn from a study of events in history or facts in Geography of these countries concerned. Elizabeth Aladai, the sister of Louis is the guiding spirit of the women's war. Incomprehensible and weird, wrapped up in her mysterious ju-ju practice, she begins the war so peaceably that nobody seemed to take notice of it. (p 234). It is, in fact, a war of superstitions and ignorance against the growing influence of the advanced European knowledge and superior culture. The arguments put forward in support of the women's war are naive and childlike. All men come from women, drink women's blood and the women can legitimately take back the blood (here the reference is to the blood of the white men) by killing them (pp 236-37). The patent illogicality of the argument taxes the credulity of the discriminating reader but the women's war, conducted with all the ferocity and ruthlessness (pp 237-41), possible in a tale of make-believe, immediately captures our attention, and the meaning broadens out to become an eloquent comment on the way grievances against white rule gather strength in places like Southern Nigeria and Western Sudan. On the question of women's war Cary himself has allayed the misgiving in our mind by what he inserted before writing the prefatory essay. "Incidents of the women's war described in it must not be taken to refer in any way to the women's wars of Southern Nigeria during the last ten years."⁵

His portrayal of life is coloured by the patterned use of prose expression. For example, in *Aissa Saved* a boy called Ojo is a preacher and an interpreter for the missionary, Carr. He explains the Bible to the people and quotes what Jesus said in this way. "But if I die *slow, slow* with much pain, will not that do for many people? A little later he explains how Jesus is belived to have told to the judge: "You must go to hell, *small, small*. (p 36). Following a great fight Shangoedi addresses Ali and says: 'Lord, our master, our *father and mother*, save us from the wicked pagans. (p 83). We seem to bear an echo of the same expression when Mister Johnson asks favour of the judge: 'Oh, sah, you my good frien'—my *father and mother*—I pray you do it—I tink you perhaps shoot me.' (p 207. *Mister Johnson*. Penguin Classics). A unique and expanding meaning is generated by the uses of such phrases and words with tedious regularity and the pattern of speech, flowing into change in events, determine the vision of life he depicts in the novels.

Cary is steeped in the study of the ancient masters of literature. His characters quote phrases and speeches with effortless ease. Judy

Cooter and Louie's Aladai' were once talking to each other. The topic of discussion was astronomy when we hear Aladai quoting in his finest voice.

There was a time when meadow, grove and stream

... ..
... ..

The glory and the freshness of a dream.' (p 117—*The African Witch*). On another occasion in the same book Fisk remarks by way of conversation : 'There is a tide in the affairs of man, you know'. (p 204) Rudbeck in *Mister Johnson* is inspired by the spirit of creative energy, and in an impatient mood says to Bulteel, 'Ours not to reason why.' (p 186). Whether quoted from Wordsworth, Shakespeare or Tennyson such words, phrases and stanzas become important for what they mean in the context of the times and place where they are spoken, and not in themselves. Sometimes he borrows the literary devices of old master and perhaps uses them unconsciously. In imitation of the imaginary conversation in Landor Aissa and Jesus exchange ideas and information with each other. (p 150). At a point when she is obsessed in the act of conversation, Cary rescues her, hands her over to his wife Hilda saying, "I think now you are quite a good girl. Go easy with her, Hilda. It's like *sleep-walking*..." (p 151). Next in importance is a scene where Aissa sees a spirit, and struck mortally by fear, gives vent to her feeling in the manner of Macbeth when he saw the hallucination of a dagger suspended in the air (p 9). The use of such phrases and devices is not significant in themselves, they help him present certain aspects of life which appeal to us in so far as they enrich the vision of our life.

Cary borrowed episodes, literary phrases and stylistic devices from his predecessors but breathed insight into them in the way he made use of the situation and character. An imaginative artist like Cary never becomes hackneyed in view of his ability to think into the being, the nature and the character of such widely varied persons as Aissa, Rudbeck, Johnson, Elizabeth Aladai, Louis Aladai and Musa. Aissa, a pagan convert, declares her devotion to Jesus even at the cost of her love for her son, Abba. It is believed that the rains will come if her baby is sacrificed (pp 191-202). The boy is killed and the blood spurts out of the body in the ground (p 203). It is difficult to believe that she can sing a song of joy and glory to Jesus in a time like this. Yet, she sings :

'All de things I lak de mos
I sacrifice dem to his blood.'

But Cary has the gift of lending verisimilitude to an incredible character. By projecting the ideal of a carefree and gay mind he has sketched

the character of Mister Johnson in a vivid way. Mister Johnson bids farewell in song even when he knows fully well that that he will die presently. But for a sensitive and sympathetic mind Cary could not make him sing a song of farewell, charged with emotion, in his hour of death.

'Good-bye, my mother sky, stretch your arms all round
Watch me all time with your eye, never sleep.
Put down your bress when I thirsty ; never say give me'.

(p 244)

Again, Musa and Oya are two minor characters in *The African Witch*. They behave like brother and sister and move like married people at the same time. Both of them are type characters but distinctly fascinating and Cary, by a process of imaginative identification, makes both of them life-like and likeable. Even when Musa, a boy about twelve years old, talks in a precocious way (pp 79-82) or reacts in the most unexpected manner (pp 79-82), he remains an irresistibly charming character. The outstanding critical opinions on Joyce Cary published till to date fail to do justice to the essential nature of his creative gift. These critics try to explain his attitude and approach in terms of factual study (6), perpetual flux and endless change (7), and social change and moral responsibility (8). In fact, it is a world of imagination. The reaction and behaviour pattern of characters in the midst of violent mob fury (p 16-62. *Aissa Saved*, or p 191 *The African Witch*), their intoxicated gaiety, and fluctuation in fame and fortune (9), least expected yet quite credible, can only be clarified in terms of empathy and humour—relatively rare qualities among literary artists in the milieu in which he lived and wrote.

REFERENCE

The texts used here are those of Carfax edition, published by Michael Joseph, London, except where stated otherwise.

1. The Modern Age edited by Boris Ford. Vol. 7. Penguin Books. p 487.
2. *Mister Johnson* by Joyce Cary. Penguin Modern Classics. p 7.
3. The tragic comedians by James Hall. Chapter on Disdirected Restlessness. p 83.
4. Joyce Cary's Africa by M. M. Mahood. p 191.
5. This statement made by the author in a page (it should be page of the Carfax edition) just before the prefatory essay.
6. Joyce Cary : A Preface to His Novels by Andrew Wright.
7. The Indeterminate World : A Study of the Novels of Joyce Cary by Robert Bloom.

8. The Dark Descent : Social change and moral responsibility in the novels of Joyce Cary by Golden Larsen.

9. Mister Johnson is a figure of irrepressible delight. Even when he is caught in the act of stealing, imprisoned and insulted, his feeling of joy never fails him. Fortune deserted him towards the closing period of his life. He was doomed to die. But the reverses of fame and fortune could not take away the instructive nature of his joy. He died by the bullet of Rudbeck, a man whom he praised and loved even before the time of death.

TRANSLATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS OF SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMAS IN BENGALI

K. C. LAHIRI

In the early years of India's acquaintance with Shakespeare the number of translations of Shakespeare's works into Indian languages was comparatively small. In the nineteenth century painstaking Bengali versions of Shakespeare's masterpieces were prepared. During the second half of the century a steady output of translations appeared. And since then there has been a sort of continuity in the process of rendering Shakespeare into Bengali. In fact there has been no long break in the series of translations from 1850 till today.

At present almost all the major works of Shakespeare are available in Bengali and Hindi versions. By the beginning of the fourth decade of the present century there were over two hundred translations of Shakespeare's plays in all the fourteen major languages of India. Most of these have been undertaken by commercial publishing houses, and the renderings have been done by professional writers, journeymen in the book trade, not directly connected with teaching and the academic world.

Of Shakespeare's great plays *The Tempest* and *Macbeth* were the earliest to be done into Bengali. The first Shakespeare drama to be translated for use on the stage in India was *The Tempest*, rendered into Bengali in 1809 by Monkton, a student of Fort William College. No copy of this has survived, but there is an appreciative reference to it in official records. On the 18th February that year at the function of the annual examination Governor-General Lord Minto, who was the Visitor of the College, remarked on this translation work thus :

'The difficulty of rendering a work of that peculiar stamp, with the language of a native whose idioms and manners have so little affinity either to the genius of the author, or to the times and people for which he wrote, may be easily appreciated' (Calcutta Gazette, Feb. 21, 1809).

Rabindranath Tagore in his boyhood translated parts of *Macbeth*, and he, accompanied by his teacher, took the manuscript to Pandit

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, who appreciated the work and encouraged the young poet. Subsequently in 1880 the translation was published in the Bengali journal *Bharati*. About twenty years later in 1899 the celebrated Bengalee dramatist and theatre-manager, Girish Chandra Ghosh, wrote a more forceful translation of this great Shakespeare tragedy and staged it successfully in his theatre house.

Contrasted with the few and rather shy renderings of pure translations in the early years, adaptations of Shakespeare's works in Indian languages were from the beginning free and prolific. Beside the stiffness of translation works a natural ease and smoothness of movement marked these new creations. And Shakespeare's plays have often been adapted in such a way as to defy recognition. They have changed the original title, introduced Indian characters, local setting, and national costume. The social customs and religious beliefs were changed to suit Indian conditions.

From the purely literary point of view most of these adaptations have little intrinsic value. But they are clear indications of the strong influence Shakespeare exercised over our own dramatists.

The particular plays of Shakespeare which have been most used for the purpose of adaptation are *The Comedy of Errors*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Hamlet*.

The earliest adaptation of a Shakespeare play in Bengali was that of *Romeo and Juliet* appearing in 1864 as *Charumukh-Chittahara*, written by Harachandra Ghosh. Hemchandra Bandyopadhyay's *Romeo and Juliet* was also a good version of Shakespeare's play.

In 1869 Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar wrote *Bhranti Vilas*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* for the entertainment of the people of Bengal.

Hariraj, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, was another moderately successful production in this type of works.

Two good adaptations of *The Merchant of Venice* appeared in the first quarter of the present century, namely, Bhupendranath Bandyopadhyay's *Saudagar* in 1915 and Mahadev De's *Venice Banik* in 1925. Recent translations of *Macbeth* and other plays of Shakespeare by Prof. Niren Ray have been successful on the stage.

THE CASE FOR A SERIOUS STUDY OF CHARTIST LITERATURE

DIPENDU CHAKRABARTI

I

'If you look for the working classes in fiction, and especially English fiction, all you find is a hole. This statement needs qualifying, perhaps. For reasons that are easy enough to see, the agricultural labourer (in England a proletarian) gets a fairly good showing in fiction, and a great deal has been written about criminals, derelicts and, more recently, the working-class intelligentsia. But the ordinary town proletariat, the people who make the wheels go round, have always been ignored by novelists,'¹ Thus George Orwell in 1940. In 1971 a corrective was provided by P. J. Keating in 'The Working Classes in Victorian fiction': it is simply untrue that the urban working classes ('the people who make the wheels go round') have always been ignored by novelists. There is, in fact, a considerable body of English fiction which deals with, not merely the exceptions acknowledged by Orwell but 'the ordinary town proletariat.'

Indeed, the point at issue between Orwell and Keating, (as with many other critics,) is the extent to which the working classes were presented in the nineteenth-century middle-class fiction, not the working-class fiction itself. It seems that Orwell was not aware of the Chartist literature when he gave his cynical verdict. P.J. Keating on the other hand finds 'a genuine working-class literary tradition' in Chartist literature, yet he only briefly mentions, and then en passant, some of the Chartist novels, in the notes appended to his book. It is unfortunate that literary historians and critics should have either ignored the Chartist literature altogether or dismissed it as unworthy of serious consideration. If one looks for any reference to the Chartist writings in the so-called histories of literature, one is bound to meet with a blank, a hole. Even the sociological critics like Raymond Williams or Richard Hoggart with all their interest in the changing culture of the working-class in the modern age have little to say about the first working-class literature in England. Silence, in literature, means contempt, as Bruce R. Park observes on the modern neglect of G B. Shaw,² and the silence in this case

says as much about modern criticism as it does about the Chartist literature.

Despite Asa Briggs' complaint that a complete history of the Chartist movement is 'long overdue',³ it is the social historians who can claim to have brought to our notice the historical importance of Chartism and its cultural manifestation. Not so the literary historians. The reasons are easy to see. In the first place, the non-availability of most of the Chartist works is a factor that accounts to a large extent for their general neglect. This was probably the reason why even a Marxist critic like Caudwell left them out in 'Illusion and Reality'. Secondly, the little that is available has perhaps failed to appeal to the modern taste. A more plausible reason perhaps is the overtly political content of the Chartist literature, which seems to be offence enough to the 'gentlemen critics'⁴ to justify its banishment in the lumber-room of literary history. Had the Chartist literature flourished in France, where literature and politics have had almost a symbiotic existence, much to the chagrin of the British writers like Wyndham Lewis, it would have received, one feels, a different kind of treatment. England is the first country to produce the working-class and their literature, "the classic land" of the proletariat, according to Engels⁵, and it is also the first country to plead ignorance of its proletarian tradition in literature. It is significant that the only collection of Chartist literature that has had a wide circulation is a Russian publication in English, edited by Y.V. Kovalev, and this Russian edition, incomplete as it may be, is still the only source of information for all who want to be acquainted with the Chartist literature as a whole.

A few writers like Louis James and Dr. Margaret Dalziel⁶ have of course attempted a critical study of literature produced for the working-classes in early Victorian England, but with them it means just that kind of literature which was only commercially popular with the working-classes, not the literature that embodied their class-consciousness and revolutionary aspirations. Even in his analysis of the working-class poetry in the Appendix I of his 'Fiction for the Working Man, 1830-1850' James pays little attention to the political forces at work behind the works of Cooper and Jones. For reasons that are not clear, John Lucas did not think fit to discuss Chartist literature in 'Literature and Politics in the Nineteenth Century.' Dr. Amalendu Bose, on the other hand, has made a perceptive study of this 'obscure field of English literature' in his 'Early Victorian Poetry of Social Ferment', but his conventional assumptions about unsuitability of anger and hatred as poetic emotions ('Neither of these is a delectable passion that the human mind would care to cherish for a length of time; nor does any of these passions

possess a wide gamut of subtleties on which a poet can play several variations.') fail to do justice to the poetics of social ferment.

Chartist literature is proletarian in nature not merely because of its working-class origin, but also because of the fact that it perfectly expressed the political aspiration and the class-view of the working-class. It is this working-class point of view that distinguishes Chartist literature from other kinds of working-class literature mentioned by Louis James in his 'Fiction for the Working Man, 1830-1850'. Even the works of the writers of middle-class origin like Ernest Jones who championed the cause of Chartism had a quality quite different from that of the social-problem novels of Mrs. Gaskell and Disraeli, and this was due to their adoption of the working class view-point. Before the Chartist movement the English working-class were not sufficiently aware of themselves as a class; it was only when they stood up to defend their class interests that they in spite of their various local differences, expressed a distinct character as a class. Similarly, before Chartism working-class literature in England did not have anything like the self-awareness of a class literature. Chartism brought to it a new ideology and a new consciousness and gave birth to a new value-system with which the middle-class men of letters like Carlyle had very little sympathy.

The People's Charter for certain political demands may not appear revolutionary enough to-day, but it was definitely revolutionary in its historical context. 'Chartism', wrote Engels, 'is of an essentially social nature, a class movement.'⁷ Born of 'hunger and hatred,' the twin effects of industrial revolution, Chartist movement in its later stages came to be influenced by the ideas of Marx and Engels, and became increasingly conscious of itself as a section of a growing international working-class movement. The erroneous assumption, so common among the students of nineteenth-century literature, that the Victorian age witnessed the enormous growth of only one class, i.e. the middle class, ultimately leads to something like Brougham's spacious equation of 'the people with the middle class'⁸ As a matter of fact during the late 1830s and 40s, as Asa Briggs points out, two forms of class-consciousness were being forged in Britain, not one—middle-class consciousness and working-class consciousness. 'Each manifestation of class consciousness assisted the articulation of the other.'⁹ Chartism which was at first the 'Shibboleth' of both the workers and the radical petty-bourgeoisie led gradually to the uprising of the working-class and the result was the 'decisive separation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie.'¹⁰ The question whether the method of struggle would be guided by moral

force or physical force or both found a decisive answer at this point. The "Knife and fork question" was a truth for a part of the Chartists only, in 1838 ; it was a 'truth for all of them in 1845.'¹¹ Yet Chartism that promised a political revolution failed. O'Connor's Land Reform and his subsequent attempt to find an alliance with the middle class, the Englishman's love of constitutional forms of struggle, the new political policy of the middle-class and the local differences among the Chartist groups, all this caused the decisive defeat of Chartism. The spectre of Chartism that stalked across England in the '30s and '40s was exercised by the middle-class when they adopted the policy of offering political and economic concessions to the working-class. For they realized that 'every subscription to a benevolent scheme was in part an insurance premium against a revolution or an epidemic.'¹² Shocked at the surrender of the English working-class, Georg Weerth "the first and most significant poet of the German proletariat" according to Engels, wrote : 'The Germans have been compared to an elephant which allows itself to be teased for a long time before it loses its temper ; this is even more true of the English worker.'¹³ Engels who was keenly aware of the growing complicity of the English working-class in the economic exploitation of the colonies after their capitulation to middle-class patronage said regretfully : "the English proletariat are actually becoming more and more bourgeois so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat as well as a bourgeoisie."¹⁴ The working-class of modern Britain enjoying to-day all the comforts that an affluent Welfare State can offer after a second industrial revolution (or scientific revolution, as C. P. Snow would like to say) have hardly any affinity with their counterpart in the early nineteenth-century. The changes in the class-structure have been so sweeping in modern Britain that it is often said that 'there are no working-classes in England now.' 'Already most of us,' says Hoggart, 'inhabit an almost flat plain, the plain of the lower-middle to middle-classes.'¹⁵ This is probably one of the reasons why Chartist movement and its literature have lost much of their significance for the modern Englishman, but the historical importance of Chartism in proletarian politics and literature is still indisputable in the context of the international labour movement and the growing socialist consciousness all over the world.

II

Our conventional scale of literary values is most inadequate for a proper appreciation of the Chartist literature which originated in a political movement and grew up in an atmosphere of

oppression, persecution and revolt. The literature that had to struggle for its existence even in the inhuman environment of the jails, such as the later works of E. Jones, has every reason to demand a different criterion of evaluation. To apply to it those canons of art which it expressly defied is as absurd as 'trying a man by the laws of one country, who acted under those of another,' as Pope warned against attempts to judge Shakespeare by Aristotle's laws. Here was certainly a new kind of literature with its own conventions produced by a new class. Although the Chartist writers had no clearly defined aesthetic rules to go by, no theory like that of socialist realism or epic theatre, they certainly had a clear idea of what to write about and whom to write for. An analysis of their literary criticism published in such journals as *Northern Star*, *Friend of the People*, *the Labourer*, the *Chartist Circular* makes it quite clear that what they expected of good writers was a firm, fearless commitment to the cause of the down-trodden. This was perfectly in keeping with the spirit of the age that expressed itself in the pervasive social consciousness of all kinds of literary works including the hymns.¹⁶

'Literature is the exponent of the spirit of the age ; it is this or it is nothing,' wrote Ernest Jones.¹⁷ But Chartist literature was not merely concerned with the present, it was also deeply prophetic ; it spoke not only of what man made of man, the present condition of the working-class, but also of 'the new world, workers' heaven, that would come into existence through Liberty.

Thus the Chartist poets and writers anticipated, in essentials, what would be defined by Gorky as socialist realism : 'It is not enough merely to depict already existing things—we must also bear in mind the things we desire and the things which are possible of achievement.'¹⁸

Even in their literary judgments the Chartists were guided by criteria fundamentally different from those sanctified by the Establishment.

Byron was admired both for his 'study of the social condition of man', and for his 'immortal aspirations' for Liberty. Dickens was praised for painting the 'minutiae of the life of Labour's children', and Shelley for being the 'harbinger of the coming brightness'. The Chartists never concealed their political bias, for they believed that, 'all genuine poets are fervid politicians,' to quote Ebenezer Elliot. The article 'the Politics of Poets' in the *Chartist Circular* challenged the view of the 'gentlemen critics' that 'the union of poetry with politics is always hurtful to the politics and fatal to the poetry, 'and then went to prove, much in the manner of C. M. Bowra in 'Poetry and Politics, 1900-1960,' the intimate connection between the two by citing examples from

literary history. With the Chartists politics in a work of art was not like 'a pistol shot in the middle of a concert,' as Stendhal once remarked, but like the nucleus of an organic cell. It was this political consciousness that made 'The Labourer' (1847) ask Robert Browning to 'eschew his kings and queens', to 'quit the pageantry of courts', and 'ascend (the verb 'ascend' here is charged with a new significance) into the cottage of the poor', and Tennyson to 'tell other tales besides a love story.' 'Can Tennyson do no more than tell a country lay?' was a question that clearly expressed Chartist impatience with romantic escapism. It is interesting to note that the Chartists regarded the so-called Victorian poets of universal significance merely as 'class-poets.' 'They are class-poets, the same as we have class-legislators', wrote Ernest Jones in 'The Labourer' (1847). Only poets who spoke for the toiling masses and expressed firm support for their cause were considered as worthy of veneration. Burns, Shelley and Byron were believed to belong to this small group of poets, and Wordsworth was condemned as a renegade even in the obituary note by *The Democratic Review*, May, 1850 :

'In announcing his death, we must acknowledge that we are not impressed with any heavy sense of sorrow, for we cannot include him in the list of those who, like Burns, Byron and Shelley, have secured the lasting worship of the people by their immortal aspirations for, and soul-inspiring invocations to, Liberty. Unlike those great spirits, Wordsworth passes from amongst us *unregretted* (my italics) by the great body of his countrymen who have no tears for the salaried slave of Aristocracy and pensioned parasite of Monarchy.'

The same political consciousness that led to an outright rejection of the Poet Laureate made the Chartist writers look for the Poets of the people in Europe and America. Freiligrath, Weerth, Piere Dupont, Petofy, Pushkin all were given pride of place in several Chartist journals, which aimed at acquainting the masses with the international working-class movement and literature, a process that was supplemented by Cooper's Shakespearian Sunday Schools. It will be wrong to assume that the Chartists cared more for propaganda than literature qua literature. E. Jones indirectly stated the ideal for Chartist literature when he said, "Few attain the height of combining the Beautiful with the useful. He also criticized Ebenezer Jones for 'Indelicacy' : 'we would warn him that freedom is not licence.'

III

Turning to Chartist poetry one finds two dominant poetic modes—satirical and Idealistic—stemming from two traditions, Augustan and

romantic. The satirical poems offer a bitter expose of the hypocrisy of the landed gentry and the 'shopocracy' of the middleclass. A peer is a 'costly toy, to please a king', 'a nation's curse/ A pauper on the public purse' (What is a peer?) and a lord is, among many things, 'true to his friend's wife and chaste to his own, (How to be a Great Lord). The romantic poems, packed with revolutionary fervour and visionary afflatus, illustrate the major influence on Chartist poets—the influence of Byron and Shelley. Two themes—Liberty and People—with several variations are of the central importance. The majority of Chartist poems read like hymns to the goddess Liberty. Liberty is deified—'In Freedom's God put all your trust' (Song for the Millions, Benjamin Stoll); sublimated as 'a radiant form of light' (The Poet's Love of Liberty, Charles Cole); regarded as rooted in 'hearts, where free blood dashes' (Liberty, E. Jones), and at times as the destination—'In a bark called the Charter—for Liberty bound.' Unlike the romantics the Chartist poets considered the 'beams of dear woman's eye', the most enchanting subject of contemporary literature, as less bright than 'the glance of dear Liberty,' as in T. M. Wheeler's poem.

The endless ramifications of the theme of liberty with increasing accretion of metaphors and similes would not appear too childish if we set them against Eluard's poem 'Liberty' which offers us a whole series of images on the same subject.

That Chartism produced very few poets like E. Jones who could claim a considerable amount of individual strength was due probably to the fact that the response to the Charter was collective rather than personal. One finds a concert of many voices singing in unison, with one or two voices standing out clear and compelling. There seemed to be a deliberate attempt to resist the intrusion of personal feeling; so much so that E. Jones dedicating his poem 'The Painter of Florence' to Julian Harney said in an apologetic manner, 'I hold that the pen should be devoted to the many,' and 'the personality of praise is too often as reprehensible as the personality of censure.'¹⁹ It is for this reason that the study of the Chartist literature as a whole is more rewarding than that of the individual writers associated with it. However, the poet who commands our attention most and deserves a place beside the major nineteenth-century English poets, as Alan Bold has rightly implied by including him in his 'Socialist Verse,' is Ernest Jones. A barrister by profession, Jones started his career as a poet by writing panegyrics on the ruling class and expressing his contempt for the mass—'a horde of slaves'. The story of his conversion to Chartism and his suffering for upholding its cause, as related by G. D. H. Cole in 'The Chartist Portraits' (1941) and John Saville in

'Ernest Jones Chartist' (1952) is as moving as that of any Shakespearian tragic hero. Orator, poet, journalist, novelist, he brought to Chartist literature a freshness of vision and a breadth of outlook which are still enviable to the modern socialist writers. The contemporary critics had a very high opinion of his poetry.⁹⁰ W. S. Landor wrote of 'The Battle Day': 'It is noble! Byron would have envied, Scott would have applauded.' *Morning Post* (Jan, 11, 1856) in reviewing 'The Emperor's Vigil' described him as 'a combination of Campbell and Longfellow.' The *Guardian* (Jan. 16, 1856) compared this collection of poems with Tennyson's 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', the *Spectator* found in his language 'the lightness of the Snowflakes'. It is a pity that Jones should be totally ignored by modern literary historians and critics, though he deserves more attention than the 'Pseudos' of the Marxist poets of the 30's. One feels like asking, as the Indian editors of 'The Revolt of Hindustan' by Jones ask, whether this is 'by choice or ignorance.'⁹¹ He has some special relevance for the Indians, for he was perhaps the only Victorian poet to have supported the Indian Mutiny of 1857 in his article 'The Indian Struggle' and 'England's rule in India and the cry for vengeance,' and written a long narrative poem 'The New World' on it. More important, he wrote the poem 'in prison, with my own blood, on the loose leaves of a torn prayer book' when he was denied the use of writing materials by the prison authorities. The poem is certainly not one of his best, yet it illustrates the bold sweep and the audacious quality of his imagination, 'Song of the Low', one of the most important poems written by Jones, begins with 'We're low—We're low—We're very very low/As low as low can be : /The rich are high—for we make them so—' and then gives startling twists to the meaning of the word 'low' in the following stanzas, and finally ends by completely reversing the implication of the word—'We're not too low—to kill the foe, / But too low to touch the spoil,' With a simplicity of expression that can be found only in the songs of Blake, Jones describes the tormenting helplessness of the have-nots :

The land it is the landlord's :
The trader's is the sea ;
The ore the usurer's coffer fills
But what remains for me ?

(The Song of the Future)

His poems written in prison about his own mental and moral wrestlings have a kind of immediacy that is rarely found in Chartist poetry. To dispel 'troublesome fancies' he resolves not to 'doubt my own heart' (Prison Fancies), and to disprove that the prison makes the brain 'a shrivelled scroll' and the heart 'a living stone', he will forge 'the scowling

prison bars' into 'armour to face the world without' (Prison Bars).

Thomas Cooper's 'A Purgatory of Suicides', a poem in ten books, written with Miltonic phraseology in Spensarian stanzas, portrays a gathering of men of all ages who took their own lives and who are in a huge cavern being purged in readiness for the Paradise that is to come on earth. It is really 'unreadable' to-day, as J.F.C. Harrison says. Indeed, most of the Chartist poetry is just 'versified rhetoric' or 'plain ranting doggerel'!²² But, as Harrison reminds us, 'It was perhaps not to be expected that self-educated working-men should produce great poetry, like Johnson's female preacher the wonder was not that it was indifferently done, but that it was done at all.'

IV

One sometimes feels that the Chartist writers displayed greater potentiality in fiction than in poetry; they achieved very little in drama. 'The working Man's Wife' by Ernest Jones, the story of a poor woman's suffering for no fault of her own, is a fine specimen of realism Chartist writers aimed at. His language is as much suited to a concentrated expression of irony as to his grasp of the observed details, for instance, when he writes "the young girl had received from heaven the greatest blessing it can give the poor man's child—she was a '*little eater*' (in italics)," or when he describes the doctor Cutter: 'He was a fearless practitioner, who treated his man as a sculptor does a block of marble—cutting away without remorse or scruple'. Not only the class-conflict, but the conflict in the mind of representatives of the exploiting class, too, has been treated with great insight in 'The Confessions of a King', the story of a scheming politician fulfilling his ambition for power by cleverly manipulating the sympathy of the people and realizing at the end that though a 'conqueror of nations', he is but 'a fugitive flying from himself'. Jones has also given us a satirical portrait of an ex-king who, finding that there is no room for kings in the modern world, invests his money in the States and dies a rich business man. Of England, that was 'the hospital for sick kings', the ex-king says ruefully, 'they've got those confounded Chartists there.'

In Thomas Frost's 'The Secret' the conventional story of the seduction of a poor working girl by a rich man is presented, not in the sentimental manner of Pamela, nor with a philosophical anger against the President of the Immortals, as in Tess, but as a shocking exposure of the class bias of the rich even in their love and affection. The father of Lizzie Vincent takes revenge on the Duke of Belgrave, who seduced Lizzie and managed to put her out of his way, by taking away the Duke's legitimate

child Alicia and leaving in her place Lizzie's daughter by the Duke. Elizabeth. Alicia, adopted by Vincent, works in a workhouse and Elizabeth becomes a countess. The change of circumstances has produced a change of destiny. Hearing this, the Duke calls Vincent 'Villain', and Vincent answers, 'Suppose the children had not been changed, then Alicia would have been countess, Elizabeth the inmate of a workhouse. Who would have been the villain, then?' By employing a conventional trick—exchange of children so common in romances—Frost has brought us face to face with the harsh realities of the class-society, where love and honour and all other values are turned into their opposites as soon as they are transferred from one class to another.

It is easy to criticize the schematic rigidity of characterization, the crudeness of attitude, and indiscriminating idealization of Labour in Chartist fiction, from an aesthetic point of view to which the Chartists did not subscribe. There is certainly a great deal of truth in what P. J. Keating says of it: 'Chartist fiction is too blatantly propagandist, and artistically too close to working-class romance, for its interest to be other than historic. It does not even justify its claim to provide a unique inside view of the working-class life.'²⁴ But the important fact that critics like Keating have not taken into account is that the Chartist writers had no model to follow, no definitive proletarian literary tradition to draw on; and the Chartist writers themselves were not unaware of their limitations. 'The fiction department of literature has hitherto been neglected by scribes of our body', wrote Thomas Martin Wheeler in dedicating his novel 'Sunshine and Shadow' to Fergus O'Connor. The Chartists took over what they thought suitable for their purpose from the existing literary tradition, but their aim, conscious or unconscious (since it was not clearly formulated) was to build up a new one. It would be well to remember here that the crudity found in a literary form in its infancy is something historically inevitable. The trouble is that the modern critics who know perfectly well how to see in proper historical perspective the crudeness of early English drama or early English novel find the coarseness of the first working-class literature to be more than they can bear. The usual reaction of the modern critics vis-a-vis the English working-class literature is well exemplified by Empson's comment: 'It is hard for an Englishman to talk definitely about proletarian art, because in England it has never been a genre with settled principles, and such as there is of it, that I have seen, is bad.'²⁵

But Engels who had a more intimate acquaintance with the condition of the working-class in nineteenth-century England than modern critics can claim, has something different to say of the Chartist literature: 'The

proletariat has formed.....a literature which consists chiefly of journals and pamphlets, and is far in advance of the whole bourgeois literature in intrinsic worth.'²⁶

Whether the Chartist literature is 'bad', as Empson's comment on the whole proletarian literature in England implies, or 'far in advance of the whole bourgeois literature in intrinsic worth,' as Engels says, is a question that merits serious discussion rather than critical aphasia, which is so often symptomatic of our own class prejudice in literary studies.

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A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PROFESSOR BOSE

Born in Calcutta in 1908, son of the late B. C. Bose. Educated in Dacca (now Bangladesh); M. A. in English, Dacca University (first in the first class), 1930. Went to Oxford (Christ Church) in 1945, did research first with Professor David Nichol Smith (Merton Professor) and then with Lord David Cecil (Goldsmith Professor) ; D. Phil., Oxford, 1947.

Joined the Education department of the Government of Bengal ; Lecturer in Dacca College and afterwards in Rajshahi College, 1931 to 1937, joined the department of English, University of Dacca and worked there till departure for Oxford in 1945. On return from Oxford in 1947, rejoined his old department in Dacca University. In 1948, moved on to Banaras Hindu University as Assistant Professor. From 1949 to 1961, was in the department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, first as Reader and then from 1952 as Professor. From 1961 till retirement in 1973, held the Sir Gooroodas Banerjee Chair in English Language and Literature in this University. In 1961, was invited to work as Visiting Professor in Indiana University and George Washington University. In 1965, was Visiting Professor in the University of Keele. National Lecturer, 1972-73, University Grants Commission.

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